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MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE

OF

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

GEORGE CANNING.

LONDON:
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GEORGE CANNING.

"First, he was desirous to have the rule and principality in his own hands; ..... Lastly, he endeavoured to do such actions as might continue his memory, and leave an impression of his good government to after ages."

BACON.

"What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!"

BURKE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO THE

NOBLEMEN AND GENTLEMEN

OF

THE BRITISH NATION,

WHO HAVE CONFERRED UPON THEIR COUNTRY IMMORTAL

HONOUR,

BY THEIR PATRIOTIC SUBSCRIPTIONS

TOWARDS ERECTING A MONUMENT IN MEMORY OF THE LATE

PREMIER,

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE GEORGE CANNING,

THESE VOLUMES

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

THE author of these volumes claims for himself two things—diligence and impartiality. He has spared no pains to procure every thing Mr. Canning ever said or wrote of a public nature. He has made the best selection in his power; and he flatters himself that there is not a sentiment, for which that great man was distinguished, which is not preserved in these pages. His best arguments, his most splendid orations, indeed whatever bears the impress of Mr. Canning's intellectual or political character, are thus presented to the public in a consecutive series. Throughout the writer has endeavoured to do his illustrious subject ample justice; while he has not concealed his own opinions, though they are often at variance with those on which he has felt it his duty to animadvert. The present is a fair and extended review of Mr. Canning's public life. It is not drawn up by a partizan, but maintains throughout the principles which Mr. Pitt upheld in his best days, and which Mr. Canning was proceeding to adopt in his last. The author deeply

laments the extinction of so bright a luminary at the moment of its meridian splendour, and regrets that this nation and the world have been suddenly deprived of a patriot, that reflected so much glory on his country, and of a philanthropist, that promised to confer so many blessings upon the human race.

November 30, 1827.

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE

OF THE

RIGHT HON. GEORGE CANNING.

It is the mournful task of the biographer of this great man to commence his labours amid the universal gloom occasioned by his death. One advantage, however, will accrue from this circumstance; he will write under the influence of chastened feelings: and while he exhibits human greatness at its highest point of elevation, he will not forget that "man being in honour abideth not;" that "at his best estate he is altogether vanity;" and that the events of any life are only worthy of being recorded, as their consequences are likely to stretch into futurity, and to yield a wide and lasting benefit to the public. Men distinguished by wonderful faculties and endowments, and who have occupied stations of eminence, can never live in vain. They are mighty, for evil, or for good. Sometimes they are the instru-

ments of distributing both in strange combination or succession; and in estimating their real importance to mankind, the moralist is perplexed whether to place them among the benefactors or the enemies of their species. The principles of Mr. Canning will be variously appreciated: some will denounce them as illiberal and despotic; others will admire them as the perfection of political virtue. But of his talents, and his consecration of those talents to what he considered the real prosperity of his country, there can be but one opinion: and whatever may be thought of his policy, it is certain that he was swayed by no inveterate prejudices. He had sufficient tact to modify his measures by circumstances; and though a tory from pride as well as interest, he could occasionally range with the whigs, and support, in some very important particulars, popular rights, in opposition to aristocratic encroachments. His vacillations, and for which he has been severely censured by the violent of all parties, were not so much deviations from his original principles, as the expedients of the hour the more surely to obtain their success and triumph. His political career, let it also be remembered, was impeded by the jealousies, the weaknesses, and the prejudices of the party with which he thought fit to identify himself. Like the first lion, he had to paw himself out of the earth; and, unfortunately for his fame and his country's welfare, as soon as he had achieved his emancipation, and risen up to his proper bearing and being, in all the fine proportions of his natural majesty, the hand of death laid his glory in the dust; so that in truth he was never permitted to become the presiding genius in the councils of his

country, nor the guiding light of her destiny. When the decision of the throne and the voice of the people invested him with this high responsibility, his constitution, already broken, sunk beneath its weight. What he was, however, belongs to his country: to use the touching expressions of Burke, in his lamentation over his son, "he was a public creature;" and the British public ought to receive with gratitude whatever tends to make him known, to illustrate his character, and to endear his memory. It will be the province of history, after generations shall have passed away, to decide upon the questions, whether he was a great statesman and a true patriot, and whether he actually advanced or retarded the improvement of mankind. The biographer's is a humbler task: he has to present the man, and to furnish materials for history. This is the whole aim of the writer of these pages; and in discharging his duty, he will avail himself of all the sources of information to which he can obtain access. He will leave his readers to use this information as they please: it will be for them to impute motives, to praise, and to blame. For himself, his business is with facts, and with the mental and moral exhibitions of his character which the illustrious subject of this brief memoir has bequeathed to posterity.

CHAPTER I.

Birth and Education of Mr. Canning.—His first Attempts in Literature.

GEORGE CANNING was born April 11th, 1770, in the parish of Mary-le-bone, where he was baptized on May the 9th of the same year. His family was originally seated at Foxcote in Warwickshire. Queen Elizabeth conferred the manor of Garvagh, in the county of Londonderry, on George Canning, a younger son of the Warwickshire family, who in consequence moved into Ireland; and from him the late premier was descended. One of his ancestors founded the church of St. Mary Ratcliffe, Bristol, and was five times mayor of that city; and another, Colonel George Canning, had the honour of being one of the protestant gentry attainted by the parliament of the meanest and worst of the Stuarts, James II., which was held at Dublin after his abdication; an attainder which was reversed by William III. Stratford Canning, Esq. of Garvagh, had two sons, George and Paul. George, the father of Mr. Canning, had the misfortune to displease his parents by marrying a dowerless beauty; and in the eyes of his father the offence was of so serious a nature, that he sent him adrift on the world with the scanty pittance of 150*l.* per annum, and a threat, which was too literally carried into effect, that it should have no augmentation at his death. The youth, thus discarded by his family, and destitute of friends, with a lovely wife dependent

upon his exertions, left Ireland, and repaired to London. Here he entered himself a student of the Middle Temple, and was subsequently called to the bar. Before his arrival in England, having distinguished himself by several tracts and poetical pieces of merit, he soon attracted the attention of men of wit, and was the associate of Whitehead, Keats, Cawthorn, Churchill, Lloyd, and the elder Coleman. His political predilections were peculiarly strong, and he soon became the able and zealous partisan of Wilkes. Poetry and politics are not very friendly to the application and perseverance which the legal profession demands. Wits, and demagogues, who live by their wits, are not the most efficient patrons of a young man whose ambition is to rise at the bar. This was discovered too late by this talented, independent, and unfortunate man. He abandoned his profession as flat and unprofitable, and set up the business of a wine-merchant. In this too he failed. Several other efforts, which he made, were equally unsuccessful; and, sinking under the accumulated miseries of penury, vexation, and disappointment, he died of a broken heart on the 11th of April, 1771, on the very first birth-day of his illustrious son, who, with his mother, was left in such circumstances of utter destitution, that the latter was obliged, for her maintenance, to attempt the stage; and she appeared as Jane Shore to Garrick's Lord Hastings. Her performance, however, not being to the taste of a London audience, she was compelled to accept of provincial engagements, and at length married a person of the same profession. In youth she was beautiful and accomplished. In after life, little more is known of her than that she re-

ceived, to the last hour of her earthly existence, the unmeasured and dutiful attentions of her illustrious son.

The Garvagh family, though highly displeased with Mr. Canning's marriage, relented so far, at his death, as to take care of his son George's education; and the future prime minister was placed at Eton by the liberality of his uncle, a merchant of some eminence. Here his progress was so rapid as to obtain him a distinguished rank among his contemporaries; and, at the age of fifteen, we find him one of the senior scholars. It is highly creditable to this aspiring boy and his chosen companions, that, instead of wasting their leisure hours in the juvenile follies and amusements which were so prevalent around them, they resolved to spend them in

> ——"search of deep philosophy,
> Wit, eloquence, and poesy,"

"arts which they loved;" that they sought their gratification not in "toys, or lust, or wine," but in originating and sustaining a literary periodical work, after the manner of our elder essayists, the Spectator and the Adventurer, which they entitled the MICROCOSM, and which appeared once and sometimes twice a week. Mr. Canning was the editor, under the assumed name of Gregory Griffin. His associate contributors were Mr. John Smith, Mr. Robert Smith, Mr. John Freer, Messrs. Mellish, Way, and Littlehales, and Lord H. Spencer. The work commenced in November, 1786, and concluded in the July following. Mr. Canning wrote ten or twelve papers; and, considering that he was then only in his sixteenth

year, his contributions are more than worthy of his subsequent fame. Greece may well regret that the enthusiasm of youth dies away before the cold calculations of age, and that the statesman should have been so long unmindful of the reminiscences of her departed liberty, which glowed in the fancy, and raised the ardent indignation of the school-boy, against her oppressors. Mr. Canning's poem on this high theme deserves a place in his memoirs, as an early performance, and as breathing sentiments of freedom, which, at the present time, are peculiarly seasonable.

THE SLAVERY OF GREECE.

Unrivall'd Greece! thou ever-honour'd name,
Thou nurse of heroes dear to deathless fame!
Though now to worth, to honour all unknown,
Thy lustre faded, and thy glories flown,
Yet still shall memory with reverted eye
Trace thy past worth, and view thee with a sigh.

Thee Freedom cherish'd once with fostering hand,
And breathed undaunted valour through the land.
Here the stern spirit of the Spartan soil
The child of poverty inured to toil.
Here, loved by Pallas and the sacred nine,
Once did fair Athens' towery glories shine.
To bend the bow, or the bright falchion wield,
To lift the bulwark of the brazen shield,
To toss the terror of the whizzing spear,
The conquering standard's glittering glories rear,
And join the maddening battle's loud career,
How skill'd the Greeks; confess what Persians slain
Were strew'd on Marathon's ensanguined plain;
When heaps on heaps the routed squadrons fell,
And with their gaudy myriads peopled hell.

What millions bold Leonidas withstood,
And seal'd the Grecian freedom with his blood;
Witness, Thermopylæ! how fierce he trod,
How spoke a hero, and how moved a god.
The rush of nations could alone sustain,
While half the ravaged globe was arm'd in vain.
Let Leuctra say, let Mantinea tell,
How great Epaminondas fought and fell!

Nor war's vast art alone adorn'd thy fame,
"But mild philosophy endear'd thy name."
Who knows not, sees not, with admiring eye,
How Plato thought, how Socrates could die?

To bend the arch, to bid the column rise,
And the tall pile aspiring pierce the skies,
The awful fane magnificently great,
With pictured pomp to grace, and sculptured state,
This Science taught; on Greece each science shone.
Here the bold statue started from the stone;
Here warm with life the swelling canvas glow'd;
Here big with thought the poet's raptures flow'd;
Here Homer's lip was touch'd with sacred fire,
And wanton Sappho tuned her amorous lyre;
Here bold Tyrtæus roused the enervate throng,
Awaked to glory by the' aspiring song;
Here Pindar soar'd a nobler, loftier way,
And brave Alcæus scorn'd a tyrant's sway;
Here gorgeous Tragedy, with great control,
Touch'd every feeling of the' impassion'd soul;
While in soft measure tripping to the song
Her comic sister lightly danced along.—

This was thy state! but oh! how changed thy fame,
And all thy glories fading into shame!
What! that thy bold, thy freedom-breathing land
Should crouch beneath a tyrant's stern command!
That servitude should bind in galling chain,
Whom Asia's millions once opposed in vain;

Who could have thought? who sees without a groan,
Thy cities mouldering, and thy walls o'erthrown.
That where once tower'd the stately solemn fane,
Now moss-grown ruins strew the ravaged plain,
And unobserved but by the traveller's eye,
Proud, vaulted domes in fretted fragments lie,
And the fallen column on the dusty ground
Pale ivy throws its sluggish arms around.

Thy sons (sad change!) in abject bondage sigh;
Unpitied toil, and unlamented die:
Groan at the labours of the galling oar;
Or the dark caverns of the mine explore.
The glittering tyranny of Othman's sons,
The pomp of horror which surrounds their thrones,
Has awed their servile spirits into fear,
Spurn'd by the foot they tremble and revere.
The day of labour, night's sad, sleepless hour,
The' inflictive scourge of arbitrary power,
The bloody terror of the pointed steel,
The murderous stake, the agonizing wheel,
And (dreadful choice!) the bowstring, or the bowl,
Damps their faint vigour, and unmans the soul.
Disastrous fate! still tears will fill the eye,
Still recollection prompt the mournful sigh;
When to the mind recurs thy former fame,
And all the horrors of thy present shame.

So some tall rock, whose bare, broad bosom high
Towers from the earth, and braves the' inclement sky;
On whose vast top the blackening deluge pours,
At whose wide base the thundering ocean roars;
In conscious pride its huge gigantic form
Surveys imperious and defies the storm.
Till worn by age, and mould'ring to decay,
The' insidious waters wash its base away,
It falls, and falling cleaves the trembling ground,
And spreads the tempest of destruction round.

The prose compositions which Mr. Canning contributed to the Microcosm are remarkable for the purity of their style, the easy gaiety of their wit, and their high tone of moral sentiment. They discover rather cleverness than genius. He appears in these early efforts like the *eaglet*, almost too callow to try her pinions, and yet so confident of power, that she will venture to spread them in the sun; and if she cannot soar, to prove that she was never born to sink, or to rest ingloriously in her parent nest.

We preserve the following as among the most characteristic of Mr. Canning's essays, and in which we think may easily be discerned the genius of that classical and playful oratory for which he was afterwards so justly celebrated.

THE MICROCOSM.—No. II.

Jurare—et fallere Numen.—*Virgil.*
To swear and forswear.

Nec sine ulla mehercule ironia loquor.—*Cicero.*
To speak ironically.

"Having, in my former paper, fully, and I hope satisfactorily, explained the nature and tendency of this work, and as far as I could foresee them, answered, if not obviated, all the objections most likely to be started against an undertaking of the kind, I shall forbear detaining my readers by any farther prefatory observations, and proceed immediately in the execution of my plan: premising only, that, should it appear to the elder part of my readers, that the subject now before them is too lightly treated, I would not have them

conclude from thence, that I am not well aware of its intrinsic weight and importance. Let them however be sensible, that Gregory Griffin does not, with the self-assumed arrogance of an universal censurer, commit to the public these his lucubrations as dictatorial lectures on morality, but as the reflections of an impartial observer of all transactions, principally indeed those of this lesser world, of which he boasts himself a citizen. These, as they afforded both entertainment and instruction to him in their formation, he presumes to hope may be the source of the one or the other to some of his readers. In this character I would wish them to consider me in the following paper, and withal to keep in their minds a maxim, indisputable perhaps from the weight of its authority,

——————— Ridiculum acri
Fortius ac melius magnas plerumque secat res.
——————— Where moral precepts fail,
The sneer of ridicule will oft prevail.

"It has often occurred as a matter of surprise to me and a few friends, who, like myself, can find pleasure in such speculations as arise more immediately from common occurrences, that, among the crowds of pretenders, who profess to teach every accomplishment, necessary or unnecessary, to form the character of a complete gentleman, no one has as yet attempted to give instructions in a science, the use of which is more generally adopted, by all ranks of people, than perhaps any other under the sun. The reader will probably guess, that I allude to the noble art of Swearing.

"So universally, indeed, does this practice prevail, that it pervades all stations and degrees of men, from

the peer to the porter, from the minister to the mechanic. It is the bond of faith, the seal of protestations (the oaths of lovers, indeed, are a theme too trite to need discussion here), and the universal succedaneum for logical or even rational demonstration. And here I cannot forbear reflecting on the infinite improvements made by moderns in the method of elucidating and confirming all matters of opinion. A man now-a-days has need but to acquire one quality, impudence, and to get rid of a troublesome companion, conscience, to establish whatever maxims he may take in his head. Let him but confirm with an oath the most improbable conjectures, and if any one calls his honour in question, the manner of settling all such disputes is too obvious to need explanation. And by these means how much unnecessary trouble does he save the rational talents of his auditors! what a world of useless investigation! Who can help lamenting that this method of arguing was not long ago adopted? We should then probably have escaped being pestered by the eternal disputations of that useless set of creatures called philosophers; as any tolerable swordsman might have settled the universal system according to his own plan, and made the planets move by what regulations he pleased, provided he was ready, in the Newgate phrase, 'to swear through thick and thin.'

"But this is a small part only of the advantages attendant on the extensive practice of this art. In the councils of the cabinet, and the wranglings of the bar, it adds weight to the most striking arguments, and by its authority enforces conviction.

"It is an old proverbial expression, that 'there go two words to a bargain;' now I should not a little

admire the ingenuity of that calculator who could define, to any tolerable degree of exactness, how many oaths go to one in these days: for I am confident that there is no business carried on, from the wealthiest bargains of the Exchange, to the sixpenny chafferings of a St. Giles's huckster, in which swearing has not a considerable share. And almost every tradesman, 'meek and much a liar,' will, if his veracity be called in question, coolly consign to Satan some portion of himself, payable on demand, in case his goods be not found answerable to his description of their quality.

"I remember to have heard of a person of great talents for inquiry, who, to inform himself whether the land or the water bore the greater proportion in the globe, contrived to cut out, with extreme nicety, from a map, the different portions of each, and by weighing them together, decided it, in favour of which it is not now material. Could this experiment be made with regard to the proportion which oaths bear to the rest of our modern conversation, I own I am not without my suspicions, that the former scale would in some cases preponderate; nay, certain I am, that these harmless expletives constitute considerably the weightiest part in the discourse of those who, either by their own ignorant vanity, or the contemptuous mock-admiration of others, have been dignified with the title of bucks. And this indeed, as well in that smaller circle which falls more immediately under my observation, as in the more enlarged society of men; among whom, to a buck who has the honour to serve his majesty, a habit of swearing is an appendage as absolutely essential as a cockade or a commission: and many a one there is among this order who will

sit down with equal ardour and self-complacency to devise the cut of a coat, or the form of an execration.

"Nay, even the female sex have, to their no small credit, caught the happy contagion; and there is scarce a mercer's wife in the kingdom but has her innocent unmeaning imprecations, her little oaths 'softened into nonsense,' and, with squeaking treble, mincing blasphemy into odsbodikins, slitterkins, and such like, will 'swear you like a sucking dove, ay, an it were any nightingale.'

"That it is one of the accomplishments of boys is more than sufficiently obvious, when there is scarce one, though he be but five years old, that does not lisp out the oaths he has heard drop from the mouths of his elders; while the happy parent congratulates himself on the early improvement of his offspring, and smiles to discover the promising seeds of manly wit in the sprightly sallies of puerile execration. On which topic I remember to have heard an honest Hibernian divine, whose zeal for morality would sometimes hurry him a little beyond the limits of good grammar, or good sense, in the height of declamation declare, that 'the little children, that could neither speak nor walk, run about the streets blaspheming.'

"Thus, then, through all ranks and stages of life, is swearing the very hinge of conversation! It is the conclusive supplement to argument, the apology for wit, the universal medium through which every thought is conveyed; and as to the violent passions, it is (to use the words of the poet) 'the very midwife of the mind;' and is equally serviceable in bringing forth the sensations of anger or kindnesss, hope or

fear; the ecstasies of extravagant delight, or the agonies of comfortless despair. What mortal among us is there, that, when any misfortune comes on him unexpectedly, does not find himself wonderfully lightened of the load of his sorrow, by pouring out the abundance of his vexation in showers of curses on the author of his calamity? What gamester, who has reduced himself from opulence to beggary, by the intemperate indulgence of a mad infatuation, does not, after sitting down and venting his execrations for half an hour against his ill fortune and his folly, get up again greatly relieved by so happy an expedient?

"Since, then, the advantages arising from an early initiation into the practice of swearing must so evidently appear to every person unprejudiced against it, by notions (now indeed almost out of date) of religion and morality, I cannot but be surprised, that no one has yet attempted to reduce to system, and teach the theory of an art, the practical part of which is so universally known and adopted. An undertaking of this kind could not surely fail of success; especially in an age like this, when attempts of a much more arduous nature are every day presented to our notice: when pigs are brought to exercise all the functions of rationality; and Hibernians profess to teach the true pronunciation of the English tongue.

"It is not so very far removed, but that some of my readers must recollect the time when the noble art of boxing was, by the ever-memorable Figg and Broughton, reduced to a complete and perfect system; and the nobility and gentry were taught theoretically, as well as practically, to bruise the bodies, and (to use a technical term) darken the day-lights of each

other, with the vigour of a Hercules, tempered with the grace of an Apollo. And it is but a little time since a celebrated foreigner actually instructed some persons, of no inconsiderable rank, of both sexes, in the art of eating soup with ease and dexterity (though, in my humble opinion, few people could need a preceptor to show them the way to their mouths). Of much more utility, and surely not less successful, would be the plan I recommend. Many there were, who, from tenderness of age, or delicacy of constitution, were precluded from the diversion of boxing: to many the science of soup-eating was useless and impracticable,—merely from having none to eat;—but all have their oaths in their own power, and of them, neither emptiness of pocket, nor corporeal or mental imbecility, prevents the free and uncontrolled use; and almost every body, however niggardly he may be in parting with any other of his possessions, scatters these with the most liberal profusion.

"Thus then, if fostered by the hand of a skilful linguist, this science might perhaps in time come nearer than any other to realize the extravagant idea of the ingenious but romantic Bishop Wilkins, of an universal language. At present, indeed, there are some slight inconveniences attending the project, among which no small one is, that, according to their present general usage, oaths, like Yorick's French friseur, by expressing too much, generally mean nothing; insomuch that I now make it a rule to lessen my belief to every assertion, in proportion to the number of needless corroborative oaths by which it is supported. Nor am I indeed unreasonable in this; and in most cases how can I do otherwise? Is it in

human nature to suppose, that when one of my friends declares his joy at seeing me, and his kind concern for my health, by intimating a hearty wish of my eternal perdition, that he really means what he says?

"It has been observed by some ancient philosopher, or poet, or moralist (no matter which), that nothing could be more pernicious to mankind than the fulfilling of their own wishes. And in truth I am inclined to be of his opinion; for many a friend of mine, many a fellow-citizen of this lesser world, would, had his own heedless imprecations on himself taken effect, long ere this have groaned under the complication of almost every calamity capable of entering a human imagination. And with regard to the world at large, were this to be the case, I doubt whether there would be at this present time a leg or limb of any kind whole in his majesty's service. So habitual indeed was this custom become to an officer of my acquaintance, that though he had lost one of his eyes in the defence of his country, he could not forego his favourite execration, but still used to vent his curses on them both, with the same ease and indifference as when they were both in his possession: so blind was he rendered to his own defects, by the continued practice of this—amusement; for in no other light than as an amusement or a polite accomplishment can it be considered by those who practise it. Did they consider it as a vice, they could not, I am sure, persevere in the indulgence of one, which has not even the common excuse of having for its aim the pursuit of pleasure, or the gratification of a darling appetite. I cannot believe they would so disinterestedly damn themselves, and vent in public company

such imprecations, as in darkness and solitude they would tremble to conceive.

"As an accomplishment, therefore, and as an agreeable indication of youthful gayety, it must no doubt be considered;—and should any one take the hint here offered him, and commence instructor in this noble science, I need not, I believe, caution him against being an Englishman; or (should he have the misfortune to be born in this country) remind him of the easy transformation of our commonest homespun names into the more fashionable French or more musical Italian; as, for instance, that of Peters into Pedro, Nichols into Nicolini, or Gerard into Geradot, and so on.—Having thus un-Englished himself, let him get his advertisement drawn up in the Grahamic style, if not by the doctor himself, professing that,

"Having added to the early advantages of a Billingsgate education, the deepest researches, and most indefatigable industry, &c. &c. he now stands forth as an apt and accomplished teacher of the never-to-be-sufficiently-extolled, the all-expressive, all-comprehensive, &c. &c. Art of Swearing. Ladies and gentlemen instructed in the most fashionable and elegant oaths; the most peculiarly adapted to their several ages, manners, and professions, &c. &c. He has now ready for the press a book entitled, 'The Complete Oath Register; or, Every Man his own Swearer,' containing oaths and imprecations for all times, seasons, purposes, and occasions. Also, 'Sentimental Oaths for the Ladies.' Likewise 'Execrations for the year 1786.'

"Let him, I say, do this, and he may, I believe,

assure himself of no little encouragement among the world at large; though far be it from me to presume to promise him any extraordinary countenance in that smaller circle which comes more immediately under the inspection of the Microcosmopolitan."

THE MICROCOSM.—No. XI.

Res gestæ regumque, ducumque, et tristia bella,
Quo scribi possint numero, monstravit Homerus.
Horace.

By Homer taught, the modern poet sings,
In epic strains, of heroes, wars, and kings.
Francis.

"THERE are certain forms and etiquettes in life, which, though the neglect of them does not amount to the commission of a crime, or the violation of a duty, are yet so established by example, and sanctioned by custom, as to pass into statutes, equally acknowledged by society, and almost equally binding to individuals, with the laws of the land, or the precepts of morality. A man guilty of breaking these, though he cannot be transported for a felon, or indicted for treasonable practices, is yet, in the high court of custom, branded as a flagrant offender against decorum, as notorious for an unprecedented infringement on propriety.

"There is no race of men on whom these laws are more severe than authors; and no species of authors more subject to them than periodical essayists. Homer having prescribed the form, or, to use a more modern phrase, set the fashion of epic poems, whoever presumes to deviate from his plan must not hope to

participate his dignity; and whatever method the Spectator, the Guardian, and others, who first adopted this species of writing, have pursued in their undertaking, is set down as a rule for the conduct of their followers; which, whoever is bold enough to transgress is accused of a deviation from the original design, and a breach of established regulation.

"It has hitherto been customary for all periodical writers to take some opportunity, in the course of their labours, to display their critical abilities, either by making observations on some popular author, and work of known character, or by bringing forth the performances of hidden merit, and throwing light on genius in obscurity. To the critiques of the Spectator, Shakspeare, and more particularly Milton, are indebted for no inconsiderable share of the reputation which they now so universally enjoy; and by his means were the ruder graces and more simple beauties of Chevy Chase held up to the public view, and recommended to general admiration.

"I should probably be accused of swerving from the imitation of so great an example, were not I to take occasion to show that I too am not entirely destitute of abilities of this kind; but that, by possessing a decent share of critical discernment, and critical jargon, I am capable of becoming a very tolerable commentator. For the proof of which, I shall rather prefer calling the attention of my readers to an object, as yet untreated of by any of my immediate predecessors, than venture to throw in my observations on any work which has before passed the ordeal of frequent examination. And this I shall do for two reasons; partly, because were I to choose a field, how fertile soever, of

which many others had before me been reaping the fruits, mine would be at best but the gleanings of criticism; and partly from a more interested view, from a selfish desire of accumulated praise; since, by making a work, as yet almost wholly unknown, the subject of my consideration, I shall acquire the reputation of taste, as well as judgment; of judiciousness in selection, as well as justness in observation; of propriety in choosing the object, as well as skill in using the language, of commentary.

"The epic poem on which I shall ground my present critique has for its chief characteristics brevity and simplicity. The author, whose name I lament that I am, in some degree, prevented from consecrating to immortal fame, by not knowing what it is—the author, I say, has not branched his poem into excrescences of episode, or prolixities of digression; it is neither variegated with diversity of unmeaning similitudes, nor glaring with the varnish of unnatural metaphor. The whole is plain and uniform; so much so, indeed, that I should hardly be surprised if some morose readers were to conjecture, that the poet had been thus simple rather from necessity than choice; that he had been restrained not so much by chastity of judgment as sterility of imagination.

"Nay, some there may be, perhaps, who will dispute his claim to the title of an epic poet, and will endeavour to degrade him even to the rank of a ballad-monger. But I, as his commentator, will contend for the dignity of my author; and will plainly demonstrate his poem to be an epic poem, agreeable to the example of all poets, and the consent of all critics heretofore.

"First, it is universally agreed, that an epic poem

should have three component parts; a beginning, a middle, and an end: secondly, it is allowed, that it should have one grand action, or main design, to the forwarding of which all the parts of it should directly or indirectly tend; and that this design should be in some measure consonant with, and conducive to, the purposes of morality: and thirdly, it is indisputably settled, that it should have a hero. I trust that in none of these points the poem before us will be found deficient. There are other inferior properties, which I shall consider in due order.

"Not to keep my readers longer in suspense, the subject of the poem is, 'The Reformation of the Knave of Hearts.' It is not improbable that some may object to me, that a knave is an unworthy hero for an epic poem; that a hero ought to be all that is great and good. The objection is frivolous. The greatest work of this kind that the world ever produced has the 'Devil' for its hero; and, supported as my author is by so great a precedent, I contend, that this hero is a very decent hero; and especially as he has the advantage of Milton's, by reforming at the end, is evidently entitled to a competent share of celebrity.

"I shall now proceed to the more immediate examination of the poem in its different parts. The beginning, say the critics, ought to be plain and simple; neither embellished with the flowers of poetry, nor turgid with pomposity of diction. In this how exactly does our author conform to the established opinion! He begins thus,

'The queen of hearts
She made some tarts.'

Can any thing be more clear! more natural! more agreeable to the true spirit of simplicity! Here are no tropes, no figurative expressions, not even so much as an invocation to the muse. He does not detain his readers by any needless circumlocution; by unnecessarily informing them what he is going to sing, or still more unnecessarily enumerating what he is not going to sing: but, according to the precepts of Horace,

'in medias res,
Non secus ac notas, auditorem rapit;'

that is, he at once introduces us, and sets us on the most easy and familiar footing imaginable, with her majesty of hearts, and interests us deeply in her domestic concerns. But, to proceed,

'The queen of hearts
She made some tarts,
All on a summer's day.'

"Here, indeed, the prospect brightens, and we are led to expect some liveliness of imagery, some warmth of poetical colouring; but here is no such thing. There is no task more difficult to a poet than rejection. Ovid among the ancients, and Dryden among the moderns, were perhaps the most remarkable for the want of it. The latter, from the haste in which he generally produced his compositions, seldom paid much attention to the 'limæ labor,' the labour of correction, and seldom therefore rejected the assistance of any idea that presented itself. Ovid, not content with catching the leading features of any scene or character, indulged himself in a thousand *minutiæ* of description, a thousand puerile prettinesses, which were

in themselves uninteresting, and took off greatly from the effect of the whole; as the numberless suckers, and straggling branches of a fruit-tree, if permitted to shoot out unrestrained, while they are themselves barren and useless, diminish considerably the vigour of the parent stock. Ovid had more genius, but less judgment than Virgil; Dryden more imagination, but less correctness than Pope: had they not been deficient in these points, the former would certainly have equalled, the latter infinitely outshone, the merits of his countryman. Our author was undoubtedly possessed of that power which they wanted; and was cautious not to indulge too far the sallies of a lively imagination. Omitting therefore any mention of sultry Sirius,—sylvan shade—sequestered glade,—verdant hills, — purling rills, — mossy mountains — gurgling fountains, &c. &c. he simply tells us that it was 'All on a summer's day.' For my own part, I confess that I find myself rather flattered than disappointed; and consider the poet as rather paying a compliment to the abilities of his readers, than balking their expectations. It is certainly a great pleasure to see a picture well painted; but it is a much greater to paint it well one's self. This, therefore, I look upon as a stroke of excellent management in the poet. Here every reader is at liberty to gratify his own taste; to design for himself just what sort of 'summer's day' he likes best; to choose his own scenery; dispose his lights and shades as he pleases; to solace himself with a rivulet or a horse-pond, a shower or a sun-beam, a grove or a kitchen-garden, according to his fancy. How much more considerate this, than if the poet had, from an affected accuracy of description, thrown

us into an unmannerly perspiration by the heat of the atmosphere; forced us into a landscape of his own planning, with perhaps a paltry good-for-nothing zephyr or two, and a limited quantity of wood and water. All this Ovid would undoubtedly have done. Nay, to use the expression of a learned brother commentator, 'quovis pignore dicertem,' 'I would lay any wager' that he would have gone so far as to tell us what the tarts were made of; and perhaps wandered into an episode on the art of preserving cherries. But our poet, above such considerations, leaves every reader to choose his own ingredients, and sweeten them to his own liking; wisely foreseeing, no doubt, that the more palatable each had rendered them to his own taste, the more he would be affected at their approaching loss.

'All on a summer's day.'

"I cannot leave this line without remarking, that one of the Scribleri, a descendant of the famous Martinus, has expressed his suspicions of the text being corrupted here, and proposes, instead of 'All on,' reading 'Alone,' alleging, in favour of this alteration, the effect of solitude in raising the passions. But Hiccius Doctius, a high Dutch commentator, one nevertheless well versed in British literature, in a note of his usual length and learning, has confuted the arguments of Scriblerus. In support of the present reading, he quotes a passage from a poem written about the same period with our author's, by the celebrated Johannes Pastor,* entitled, 'An Elegiac

* More commonly known, I believe, by the name of Jack Shepherd.

Epistle to the Turnkey of Newgate,' wherein the gentleman declares that, rather indeed in compliance with an old custom, than to gratify any particular wish of his own, he is going

'———— all hanged for to be
Upon that fatal Tyburn tree.'

"Now, as nothing throws greater light on an author than the concurrence of a contemporary writer, I am inclined to be of Hiccius's opinion, and to consider the 'All' as an elegant expletive, or, as he more aptly phrases it, 'elegans expletivum.' The passage, therefore, must stand thus:

'The queen of hearts
She made some tarts
All on a summer's day.'

"And thus ends the first part, or beginning, which is simple and unembellished; opens the subject in a natural and easy manner; excites, but does not too far gratify, our curiosity: for a reader of accurate observation may easily discover, that the hero of the poem has not as yet made his appearance.

"I could not continue my examination at present through the whole of this poem, without far exceeding the limits of a single paper. I have therefore divided it into two; but shall not delay the publication of the second to another week, as that, besides breaking the connexion of criticism, would materially injure the unities of the poem.

"I cannot commit this paper to the public without taking notice of an opinion which has lately been disseminated by some people, viz. That the Microcosm,

previous to its publication, is subjected to the criticism of my superiors, or (in their own words) 'looked over by ushers.' This idea is wrong in two points; first, as being miserably unclassical in phrase, and secondly, as being extremely false in information.

"Slaves cannot live in England; Ireland enjoys an immunity from toads; in a similar degree is the climate and constitution of Eton utterly unadapted to the existence of 'ushers.' And however flattering it might be to Gregory Griffin, that his works should be considered as the compositions of riper years, he cannot but think this opinion an unworthy compliment to the genius and abilities of those to whom they are, in part, ascribed.

"I think it therefore my duty, by this declaration, to 'take all my imperfections on my own head;' and to assure the public that, little as the merit may be of these compositions, they are not 'ushered' into the world by those who are degraded by the supposition, —the assistant-directors of Eton education."

THE MICROCOSM.—No. XII.

Servetur ad imum,
Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.—*Horace.*
From his first entrance to the closing scene,
Let him one equal character maintain.—*Francis.*

"HAVING thus gone through the first part, or beginning of the poem, we may, naturally enough, proceed to the consideration of the second.

"The second part, or middle, is the proper place for bustle and business, for incident and adventure.

'The knave of hearts
He stole those tarts.'

"Here attention is awakened; and our whole souls are intent upon the first appearance of the hero. Some readers may perhaps be offended at his making his entré in so disadvantageous a character as that of a thief. To this I plead precedent.

"The hero of the Iliad, as I observed in a former paper, is made to lament very pathetically, that 'life is not, like all other possessions, to be acquired by theft.' A reflection, in my opinion, evidently showing, that, if he did refrain from the practice of this ingenious art, it was not from want of an inclination that way. We may remember, too, that in Virgil's poem, almost the first light in which the pious Æneas appears to us, is a deer-stealer: nor is it much excuse for him, that the deer were wandering without keepers; for however he might, from this circumstance, have been unable to ascertain whose property they were, he might, I think, have been pretty well assured that they were not his.

"Having thus acquitted our hero of misconduct, by the example of his betters, I proceed to what I think the master-stroke of the poet.

'The knave of hearts
He stole those tarts,
And—took them—quite away—!!'

"Here, whoever has an ear for harmony, and a heart for feeling, must be touched! there is a desponding melancholy in the run of the last line! an air of tender regret in the addition of 'quite away!' a something so expressive of irrevocable loss! so forcibly intimating the '*Ah nunquam reditura!*' 'They never can return!' in short, such a union of sound

and sense, as we rarely, if ever, meet with in any author, ancient or modern. Our feelings are all alive; but the poet, wisely dreading that our sympathy with the injured queen might alienate our affections from his hero, contrives immediately to awaken our fears for him, by telling us that

> 'The king of hearts
> Call'd for those tarts.'

"We are all conscious of the fault of our hero, and all tremble with him, for the punishment which the enraged monarch may inflict;

> 'And beat the knave full sore!'

"The fatal blow is struck! we cannot but rejoice that guilt is justly punished, though we sympathize with the guilty object of punishment. Here Scriblerus, who, by-the-by, is very fond of making unnecessary alterations, proposes reading 'score' instead of 'sore,' meaning thereby to particularize that the beating bestowed by this monarch consisted of twenty stripes. But this proceeds from his ignorance of the genius of our language, which does not admit of such an expression as 'full score,' but would require the insertion of the particle 'a,' which cannot be, on account of the metre. And this is another great artifice of the poet: by leaving the quantity of beating indeterminate, he gives every reader the liberty to administer it, in exact proportion to the sum of indignation which he may have conceived against his hero; that by thus amply satisfying their resentment, they may be the more easily reconciled to him afterward.

'The king of hearts
Call'd for those tarts,
And beat the knave full sore!'

"Here ends the second part, or middle of the poem; in which we see the character and exploits of the hero portrayed with the hand of a master.

"Nothing now remains to be examined, but the third part, or end. In the end, it is a rule pretty well established, that the work should draw towards a conclusion, which our author manages thus,

'The knave of hearts
Brought back those tarts.'

"Here every thing is at length settled: the theft is compensated; the tarts restored to their right owner; and poetical justice, in every respect, strictly and impartially administered.

"We may observe, that there is nothing in which our poet has better succeeded, than in keeping up an unremitted attention in his readers to the main instruments, the machinery of his poem, viz. the tarts; insomuch, that the afore-mentioned Scriblerus has sagely observed, that 'he can't tell, but he doesn't know, but the tarts may be reckoned the heroes of the poem.' Scriblerus, though a man of learning, and frequently right in his opinion, has here certainly hazarded a rash conjecture. His arguments are overthrown entirely by his great opponent, Hiccius, who concludes, by triumphantly asking, 'had the tarts been eaten, how could the poet have compensated for the loss of his heroes?'

"We are now come to the *denouement*, the setting all to rights: and our poet, in the management of his

moral, is certainly superior to his great ancient predecessors. The moral of their fables, if any they have, is so interwoven with the main body of their work, that in endeavouring to unravel it, we should tear the whole. Our author has very properly preserved his, whole and entire for the end of his poem, where he completes his main design, the reformation of his hero, thus,

'And vow'd he 'd steal no more.'

"Having in the course of his work shown the bad effects arising from theft, he evidently means this last moral reflection to operate with his readers as a gentle and polite dissuasive from stealing.

'The knave of hearts
Brought back those tarts,
And vow'd he 'd steal no more!'

"Thus have I industriously gone through the several parts of this wonderful work; and clearly proved it, in every one of these parts, and in all them together, to be a due and proper epic poem; and to have as good a right to that title, from its adherence to prescribed rules, as any of the celebrated masterpieces of antiquity. And here I cannot help again lamenting that, by not knowing the name of the author, I am unable to twine our laurels together, and to transmit to posterity the mingled praises of genius and judgment, of the poet and his commentator."

THE MICROCOSM.—No. XXII.

Tantum de medio sumptis accedit honoris.—*Hor.*

Such honour common subjects may receive.

"SIR,—It must no doubt have occurred to a writer of your penetration, that there is nothing more unjust, and illiberal, than those ill-grounded prejudices, which confound in general censure, or undistinguishing contempt, any particular class or description of men. And yet these prejudices, however sensible we cannot but be of their improper tendency, we are all too apt to indulge; till, nourished by long habit, they take as deep a root in our minds as if they had been implanted there by nature; and acquire such strength, as enables them to withstand the most forcible arguments, to resist the most probable conviction.

"'There are in Turkey a body of men, against whom universal contempt is indiscriminately, as well as undeservedly directed; and these are, the worshipful company of Grocers. Insomuch that, should any member of a noble family have disgraced himself and his connexions, by living a life of tranquillity, or, what is worse, dying in his bed, that is, a natural death, his name is never pronounced by his relations but with disapprobation and disgust; and his memory is consigned to infamy, for having, as they say, lived and died like a Raccal, or grocer.

"'The person who has now the honour to address you is a member of a community who, by the courtesy of England, are, like the Raccals of Turkey, collectively involved in the most indiscriminate ridicule,

the most comprehensive contempt; I say collectively, sir, because individually we are allowed to have no existence; the wicked waggery of the world judging nine weavers and nine tailors requisite to the formation of a man. Yes, sir, to so high a pitch have they carried the disrespect in which these professions are held, that in the eyes of 'the many,' (as the poet calls them) to address a man by the appellation either of a weaver or tailor implies not only, as formerly, a reflection on his horsemanship, but on his personal courage, and even his personal existence.

" 'I, sir, am a weaver; I feel for the injured dignity of my profession; and since, thanks to my own genius, and two years and a half of education at an academy on Tower-hill, I have a very decent acquaintance with the classics; that is, I know them all by name, and can tell Greek when I see it, any day in the week; and since, as far as Shakspeare's plays and the monthly magazines go, I have a pretty share of English book-learning; from these considerations, Mr. Griffin, I think myself qualified to contend, not for the utility and respectability only, but for the honour of the art of weaving. Tailoring, as it is secondary to weaving, will of course partake of the fruits of my labours: as in asserting the dignity of the one, I maintain the credit of the other.

" 'To this end, Mr. Griffin, I shall not appeal to the candour of my readers, but shall provoke their judgment; I shall not solicit their indulgence, but by the force of demonstration will claim their assent, to my opinion.

" 'Poetry, sir, is universally allowed to be the first and noblest of the arts and sciences; insomuch, that

it is the opinion of critics, that an epic poem is the greatest work the human mind is capable of bringing to perfection. If then I can prove, that the art of weaving is in any degree analogous to the art of poetry; if this analogy has been allowed by the whole tribe of critics; so far, that in speaking of the latter they have used the terms of the former, and have passed judgment on the works of the Poet in the language of the Manufacturer; nay, if poetry herself has condescended to imitate the expressions, and to adopt the technical terms into her own vocabulary; then may I surely hope, that the sanction of criticism may challenge the respect, and the flattery of poetry (for imitation is the highest degree of flattery) may claim the admiration of mankind.

" ' First then with regard to criticism; to select a few examples from a multitude of others, are we not entertained in the works of Longinus and the Gentleman's Magazine with delectable dissertations on the weaving of plots and the interweaving of episodes? Are we not continually informed that the author unravels the web of his intrigue, or breaks the thread of his narration? Besides these, a friend of mine, a great etymologist, has assured me, that bombast and bombasin originally sprung from the same root; and fustian, every body knows, is a term applied indifferently to passages in poetry, or materials for a pair of breeches. So similar is considered the skill employed in the texture of the epic poem and a piece of broad cloth; so parallel the qualifications requisite to throw the shuttle and guide the pen.

" ' I was not a little pleased the other day to find, in the critique of one of the most eminent writers of

the present day, the works of a favourite poet styled a tissue. An idea then occurred to me, suggested perhaps by my partiality for my profession, which I am not without some faint hope of one day seeing accomplished.

" ' By a little labour and ingenuity, it might surely be discovered, that the works of different authors bear a considerable affinity (like this of the tissue) to the different productions of the loom. Thus, to enumerate a few instances, without any regard to chronological order, might not the flowery smoothness of Pope be aptly enough compared to flowered satin? Might not the compositions of all the poets laureate, ancient and modern, very properly be termed prince's stuff? And who would dispute the title of Homer to everlasting? For Shakspeare, indeed, I am at a loss for a comparison, unless I should liken him to those shot silks which vary the brightness of their hues into a multitude of different lights and shades. And would orthography allow of the pun, I might say, that there are few poets but would be proud to be thought worthy of the green bays.

" 'For proof of the use which poetry makes of the weaver's dictionary, *vide* ten thousand odes on Spring, where you may catch the fragrance of the damask rose, listen to the rustling of the silken foliage, or lie extended with a listless languor, pillowing your head upon the velvet mead; to say nothing of nature's loom, which is set to work regularly on the first of May, to weave variegated carpets for the lawns and landscapes. Now, Mr. Griffin, these similitudes, though very pretty and very *a propos*, I own I am not perfectly satisfied with. The Genoese certainly

excel us in the article of velvets; and the French silks are by many people far preferred for elegance to any of English manufacture. I appeal then to you, Mr. Griffin, if these allusions would not be much more delightful to British ears, if they tended to promote such manufactures as are more peculiarly our own. The Georgics of Virgil, let me tell you, sir, have been suspected by some people to have been written with a political, as well as poetical view; for the purpose of converting the victorious spirits of the Roman soldiery from the love of war, and the severity of military hardships, to the milder occupations of peace, and the more profitable employments of agriculture. Surely, equally successful would be the endeavours of our poets, if they would boldly extirpate from their writings every species of foreign manufacture; and adopt, in their stead, materials from the prolific looms of their countrymen. Surely, we have a variety which would suit all subjects and all descriptions; nor do I despair, if this letter has the desired effect, but I shall presently see landscapes beautifully diversified with (all due deference being paid to alliteration) plains of Plush, pastures of Poplin, downs of Dimity, valleys of Velveret, and meadows of Manchester. How gloriously novel would this be; how patriotically poetical an innovation; which nothing but bigoted prejudice could object to, nothing but disaffection to the interests of the country could disapprove.

" ' Excuse me, sir, if I have detained you beyond the usual limits of a letter, on a subject in which I am so deeply interested. Pardon, sir, the partiality of an old man, to the profession of his youth; and, O!

Mr. Griffin, may your paper be the means of restoring from unmerited ridicule and illiberal contempt an art which has added a clearness and a polish to the remarks of criticism; and has clothed the conceptions of poetry in the language of metaphor: an art, inferior to none, but those which have so frequently and so successfully borrowed its assistance; nor even to them, unless it can be proved, that that which provides the necessary raiment for the body should yield to those which are but the sources of amusement to the mind. I am, sir, yours, &c.

'H. HOMESPUN.'

"I cannot but own myself much pleased with the enthusiasm which seems to animate my correspondent, while he treats on a subject so near his heart. He has, I can assure him, my full approbation to his proposed improvements; and I am convinced every well-meaning person in his majesty's kingdoms must feel the force of his reasoning.—Will any caviller presume to contend, that our looms are not as fertile of poetic imagery as those of our neighbours? Have we not handkerchiefs of printed cotton, crowded with all the beauties of rural scenery? and 'azure flowers that blow,' in the carpets of the Wilton manufactory? Nay, even supposing an unquestionable inferiority on the side of the English looms, would not every Englishman still show a laudable partiality to his country? and by such a preference, what he lost in poetry, would he not amply make up in patriotism?

"In short, so convinced am I by Mr. Homespun's arguments, that I cannot help taking the earliest opportunity to recommend to such of my correspondents

as may have been induced by the forwardness of the season to begin Odes on Spring for the use of the Microcosm, that they would be careful to stick to the productions of the English loom, if they think it necessary to draw metaphors from weaving at all; that is, if they do really think, that nature can be embellished by the technical terms of art; and that the works of the Creator can receive additional beauty by being assimilated to those of the manufacturer; which, in my humble opinion, I will confess, does not appear to be the case.

"I know no better advice that I can give to my correspondents on this head, unless indeed it were not to write 'Odes on Spring' at all."

When Mr. Canning was at Eton, a society had existed for several years, which periodically met in one of the halls for the purpose of discussion. It consisted of the boys then in the establishment, and the masters wisely encouraged the practice, on account of its obvious utility. It was the cradle of great men, a sort of house of commons in miniature. Mr. Speaker took the chair; a minister sat on a treasury bench, and faced as bold an opposition as Eton could produce. "The noble lord," "the right honourable gentleman," "my honourable friend," were bandied from side to side. The order, the gravity, the importance of the original assembly, were mimicked with the greatest success. The crown and the people had their respective champions. The advocates were as solemn, as eager for victory, and as active in obtaining it, as the more mature debaters in St. Stephen's Chapel. Mr. Wellesley (now Marquis Wellesley), Mr. Grey

(now Earl Grey), and, at a subsequent period, Mr. Canning, distinguished themselves in the intellectual warfare of this juvenile house of commons.

Mr. Canning delighted in his recollection of Eton; and he assiduously kept up his connexion with that celebrated school. His annual visits to Montem were nearly uninterrupted; and he seemed, on these occasions, to resume all the hilarity of his boyhood, amidst the gaiety and juvenile folly by which he was surrounded. At the Montem of 1823 he accidentally met Mr. Brougham, for the first time, in public, after their unfortunate *escapade* in the House of Commons. The hand of the generous secretary was immediately stretched out to his great rival, in the presence of a thousand admiring spectators. On the 4th of June of the following summer, Mr. Canning was the *sitter* in the "ten-oar" at the Eton regatta, a post of honour which is always reserved by the boys for some favoured visitor. He huzzaed again and again with the loudest of them, as they passed the crowded shores; and Eton felt proud of her scholar and her statesman.

1787.—On leaving Eton, at the age of seventeen, Mr. Canning entered at Christ Church, Oxford. Here he was an indefatigable student. His classical attainments were infinitely creditable to his industry and his talents. He was not a mere linguist, but a scholar, and to the acquirements of learning he added the refinements of taste. He gained several prizes for his Latin essays, and attracted considerable notice by his orations. The universal impression at College was, that he would rise to the head of whatever profession he might choose to adopt. Yet, it was equally well known, that by talents, and talents alone, he must

force his way up the difficult ascent of fortune or fame. He had indeed cultivated, with no common assiduity, the friendship of the honourable Charles Jenkinson, (now Lord Liverpool), and that most estimable young nobleman did equal credit to his head and heart, when he admitted to his intimacy the orphan commoner, who then stood alone in the world without friends or connexions. Yet the liberal opinions, the ultra whiggism, which Mr. Canning had derived from his father, and which were cherished by his uncle, who was a strenuous supporter of Wilkes, and a determined anti-Pittite, together with the natural enthusiasm for liberty, which classical studies generally kindle in the ardent bosom of youth, when free from the chilling effects of aristocratical pride, seemed to give assurance to the world, that if he embarked his fortune on the ocean of politics, it would be in the gallant vessel of freedom, under the pilotage of the great leaders of opposition, whose wonderful talents shed a peculiar lustre on a cause, which has never stood in need of adventitious glory to attract the admiration, and secure the devotedness, of genius and youthful patriotism. It is also certain, that Mr. Canning quitted Oxford without any predilection either for the then ministry, their principles or their measures.

CHAPTER II.

Studies for the Bar—Introduction into Public Life—His Toryism and First Speeches in Parliament.

THE law appeared to be the only profession which afforded sufficient scope for the talents of Mr. Canning, and in the choice of which, he was impelled by his necessities, as well as encouraged by the prospects of rising to some of the high offices of state which it opened to his ambition. Oxford, therefore, he relinquished for Lincoln's Inn, and the certain distinctions of fellowships and degrees, which could not have failed him in the university, he cheerfully abandoned, to take his chance in the great lottery, which distributes its principal prizes among the inns of court. Mr. Canning's reputation for talents and endowments preceded him in the metropolis, and he was universally regarded by the circles in which he moved as an extraordinary young man, who was destined to make a figure in the world. Whether he was as diligent a student, to qualify him for the new career upon which he was about to enter, as he was at Eton and Oxford for the purpose of securing distinction and fame, may well be doubted. His natural disposition was companionable and social. His company was much courted. His wit was the theme of general admiration, and he was a most welcome visitor whenever he chose to accept the hospitalities of a numerous and extending circle of acquaintances. The debating clubs, which were then in vogue, and

which were very different things from the vile and beggarly associations which, since the French Revolution, have more especially disgraced the metropolis, he frequently attended. In addressing these assemblies, he acquired confidence as a public speaker, and tact and acuteness as a debater. These trials of skill were eminently useful to him, not only as they matured and exercised his powers of elocution, but as they added to his reputation, as a young man qualifying himself to act a conspicuous and important part in the drama of public life. It was soon after his settlement at Lincoln's Inn, that his talents attracted the attention of the first Lord Lansdown, who predicted to Mr. Bentham that he would one day be Prime Minister of England. At that time, the party leaders in the House of Commons used attentively to watch the colleges and public schools for young men, who displayed the marks of decided genius, in order to enlist them under their banners. All that Mr. Canning had ever discovered of a political bias, his conduct at Eton, when, with the ardour of enthusiasm, at a contest for the representation of Windsor he espoused the side of the popular against the court candidate, the doctrines of the old whig school, in which he had been educated, and, above all, his relationship to Mr. Sheridan, by his mother's side, then in his zenith, and who introduced him to Mr. Fox, Mr. Burke, Mr. Grey, and the other great whig leaders, all tended to point him out as an accession of strength to the opposition. At the instance of Mr. Burke, it is said, he abandoned the bar for the senate, and so confident were the whigs of his support, when he should take his seat in parliament, that when his college friend, the honourable

Mr. Jenkinson, delivered his maiden speech on the ministerial side of the house, and was universally cheered and hailed by his friends as the future champion of their principles, Mr. Sheridan made a personal allusion to Mr. Canning, the early associate of the youthful speaker, who had acquitted himself so much to the satisfaction of the House, assuring them that, in the cause of free and liberal opinions, he would more than eclipse the fame which Mr. Jenkinson had so deservedly acquired. Yet, it is well known, that Mr. Canning's first appearance in parliament was on the ministerial benches. Mr. Moore, in his Life of Sheridan, endeavours to account for a conduct, which appeared so perfectly at variance with all the promise of his previous life.

"From the political faith," says Mr. Moore, "in which he had been educated, under the very eyes of Mr. Sheridan, who had long been the friend of his family, and at whose house he generally passed his College vacations, the line that he was to take in the House of Commons seemed already, according to the usual course of events, marked out for him. Mr. Sheridan had, indeed, with an eagerness which, however premature, showed the value which he and others set upon the alliance, taken occasion, in the course of a laudatory tribute to Mr. Jenkinson (now the Earl of Liverpool), on the success of his first effort in the House, to announce the accession which his own party was to receive in the talents of another gentleman—the companion and friend of the young orator, who had now distinguished himself. Whether this and other friendships, formed by Mr. Canning at the University, had any share in alienating him from a poli-

tical creed, which he had hitherto perhaps adopted rather from habit and authority than choice — or whether he was startled at the idea of appearing for the first time in the world as the announced pupil and friend of a person who, both by the vehemence of his politics and the irregularities of his life, had put himself, in some degree, under the ban of public opinion —or whether, lastly, he saw the difficulties which even genius like his would experience in rising to the full growth of its ambition, under the shadowy branches of the whig aristocracy, and that superseding influence of birth and connexions, which had contributed to keep even such men as Burke and Sheridan out of the Cabinet—which of these motives it was that now decided the choice of the young political Hercules between the two paths that equally wooed his footsteps, none, perhaps, but himself can fully determine. His decision, we know, was in favour of the minister and toryism; and, after a friendly and candid explanation to Mr. Sheridan of the reasons and feelings that urged him to this step, he entered into terms with Mr. Pitt, and was by him immediately brought into parliament. However dangerous it might be to exalt such an example into a precedent, it is questionable whether, in thus resolving to join the ascendant side, Mr. Canning has not conferred a greater benefit on the country than he ever would have been able to effect in the ranks of his original friends. That party, which has now so long been the sole depositary of the power of the state, had, in addition to the original narrowness of its principles, contracted all that proud obstinacy in antiquated error, which is the invariable characteristic of such monopolies; and which, however

consonant with its vocation, as the chosen instrument of the crown, should have long since invalided it in the service of a free and enlightened people. Some infusion of the spirit of the times into this body had become necessary even for its preservation, in the same manner as the inhalement of youthful breath has been recommended by some physicians to the infirm and superannuated. This renovating inspiration the genius of Mr. Canning has supplied. His first political lessons were derived from sources too sacred to his young admiration to be forgotten. He has carried the spirit of these lessons with him into the councils which he joined, and by the vigour of the graft, which already, indeed, shows itself in the fruits, bids fair to change altogether the nature of toryism."

We are quite of Mr. Moore's opinion as to the benefit which this determination of Mr. Canning conferred upon the country. But with regard to the candid explanation to Mr. Sheridan of the reasons and feelings which urged him to enter into terms with Mr. Pitt, we remember that there were two anecdotes in circulation at the time. It was said, that the measure originated with Mr. Sheridan, that, with more private sincerity and individual friendship than public honesty, he undertook to convince his aspiring *protegé*, that liberal notions and exalted principles of freedom are productive of nothing but empty fame and the admiration of the vulgar; whilst it was certain and irretrievable ruin for a poor man to enter the House of Commons with a view to public business, unless he was predetermined to devote his talents to the support of the minister. But that, for talents united with

a flexible disposition, and "a learned spirit of human dealings," the House of Commons is the richest market in the world. The other story is, that, at one of the suppers, given by the celebrated blue stocking of that day, Mrs. Crew, at whose hospitable mansion all the whigs and wits in town were accustomed to assemble, and among whose constant guests were numbered Fox and Sheridan, Mr. Canning, then about twenty-three years of age, in a tête-à-tête with Sheridan (whom he had allured from the circle of his friends for the purpose), formally consulted him on the expediency of giving up an unprofitable set of principles for others that were more marketable and productive, or in other words, of abandoning his friends and going over to the minister; and that Sheridan, after he had listened to the communication with all due gravity, as if deeply interested in the question, instead of replying to the private ear of the anxious querist, broke forth in a loud and humorous appeal to the lady hostess, and the coterie which surrounded her, demanding their judgment on a point of so much consequence to the character and consistency of the scrupulous and conscientious young gentleman, who requested their advice.

Without much diminishing the interested and ambitious motives which these statements ascribe to Mr. Canning, as principally influencing him to abandon his party and his earliest friends, we may yet fairly imagine that the character which the French revolution at that time assumed; the horrors and atrocities which rendered it the opprobrium and the terror of the civilized world; together with the violence of party spirit in parliament, and the wild and visionary doc-

trines which began to spring up among the reformers out of doors, without receiving the slightest check from the great leaders of the opposition, had their full effect in shaking his attachment to the popular cause. The example of Mr. Burke, too, whose lofty bearing and pre-eminent talents made him the idol of his friends, and the admiration of his enemies, contributed its full share in producing the conversion of the incipient statesman; who, while in a state of mind similar to that in which Garrick is represented in the beautiful picture of Sir Joshua Reynolds, where he is wooed by tragedy and comedy, discovering an equal inclination to both, was no doubt gently taken by the hand by his friend Jenkinson, and led to the great political Apollo, the god of the House of Commons, who decided that he should be the comic performer, to enliven the solemn gravity of that band of tragedians he had engaged, less for the amusement than the intimidation of Europe. In consequence of this introduction to Mr. Pitt, he was soon admitted into parliament, Sir Richard Worsley vacating his seat for Newport, in the Isle of Wight, in order to afford the minister an oratorical, instead of a silent supporter. This was in the year 1793, and when Mr. Canning was in his twenty-third year; but it was not till the 31st of January, 1794, that he ventured to address the House. The occasion was by no means auspicious; it brought him likewise in immediate collision with Mr. Fox; and the moderate men of all parties felt any thing but gratification when they saw the premier expose his mighty and generous rival to the flippant attack of an arrogant young man, who treated him with as much *nonchalance* and levity as if he had been one of

the mimic opposition of about his own age and standing at Eton. Mr. Fox assailed the treaty by which Mr. Pitt had granted a very large subsidy to the king of Sardinia, for promises to fight his own battles, and to support a number of troops, contemptible in quantity, and numerically disproportioned to the magnitude of the subsidy.

Mr. Canning's reply is remarkable for two things, its extraordinary tact, evincing a perfect acquaintance with the prejudices and views of the audience he had to address, to whom it was exclusively adapted; and for its absolute, unmeasured, and even violent defence of the war. "It was," says Woodfall, the reporter, 'an able and succinct recapitulation of the arguments which in the former session were urged by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and other members of both Houses, in support of the necessity of the war, and the evils it was hoped it would correct, which, if not resisted effectually, would make Great Britain a scene of the same anarchy and irreligion that at present rendered France a field of horror and bloodshed."

Among other striking points in this part of Mr. Canning's speech, one was his remark, that had it not been for the war, some Corresponding revolution-society might possibly have been sitting on the benches of the House; or instead of debating on a treaty of alliance, they might have been debating on the means of raising a forced loan, demanded by some proconsular deputy from the French convention. He had lately come, he said, from among the people, where he had seen the utmost unanimity for prosecuting the war; and when he came among their representatives, he was happy to find that their sentiments were as

they ought to be in unison with those of their constituents.

Of his dexterity in managing an argument, derived from not a very analogous precedent, in this his very first effort in parliament, the following is a specimen; and the reader should bear in mind that it is in reply to a very luminous and common sense statement of Mr. Fox. In defending the grant to the King of Sardinia, which was resisted on the ground that it proposed a greater price for similar advantages, or accepted of a less return for a similar reward, than preceding treaties for subsidizing foreign powers, Mr. Canning alluded to the treaty of 1758, concluded between this country and the then King of Prussia, who in the midst of a war in which he was involved was actually subsidized by us to the amount of 670,000*l.* per annum; and the grounds on which this subsidy was expressly stated to be granted were these three: that he was oppressed by enemies who had attacked him on all sides; that he was in appearance unable to resist them; and that his overthrow would be destructive to the balance of power in Europe. Here then was a precedent establishing both the principle and fact upon which the present treaty was founded; a precedent, which, it must be remembered, was carried not only without opposition, but with triumph, through that house, and received the united suffrage of the whole nation. The question then was concerning the balance of power, and how far it was connected with the necessity of granting that subsidy. He would ask whether this question was more likely to avail in taking the money out of the pockets of our ignorant peasantry than that which concerned

their dearest interests, and on which depended their very existence? Could it have been stated to them, that the balance of power depended upon their putting their hands in their pockets to assist a man comparatively poor as themselves; or was it likely that they should understand the subject better than when told that in subsidizing the King of Sardinia, they were contributing to their immediate preservation? It having been admitted on all hands that the King of Sardinia was too poor and too impotent to carry on the war alone, the question was, whether we should support him, or whether, inasmuch as it was supposed the Earl of Yarmouth had negotiated best because he had cost us nothing, so we were to suppose the King of Sardinia would fight the better because he was left unpaid? He did not mean any personal disrespect to the right honourable gentleman to whom he alluded, but according to his argument, even the King of Sardinia ought to subsidize us; that is, finding that power weaker and less able to defend herself than the rest of our allies, we should have said to her, "you shall fight, and pay us for just doing nothing at all but looking on." This precedent tending then evidently to justify the present treaty, both in principle and fact, the only possible objections that could be stated against it, Mr. Canning said, must arise from the war itself. This afforded him an opportunity of joining in the warcry after the manner we have just stated, and thus he concluded what the report designates a very masterly maiden speech.

On the 10th of April of the same year, we find Mr. Canning taking a part in the debate on the review of the preceding campaign. Major Maitland

proposed in a speech of considerable detail, argument, and eloquence, an inquiry into the conduct of the war, and especially during the last campaign. His motion was "that the house resolve itself into a committee of the whole house to inquire into the causes which led to the failure of the army under His Royal Highness the Duke of York, at Dunkirk; and also to inquire into the causes which led to the evacuation of Toulon, under the command of General Dundas, and Vice-admiral Lord Hood." In this discussion Mr. Jenkinson distinguished himself. In his speech he replied *seriatim* to all the imputations which Major Maitland had cast upon his majesty's ministers. This effort of the friend of Canning, and the future minister of Great Britain, displayed some spirit, but no genius. It proved him to be a man of patient research, imperturbable, dogged, and not easily diverted from his purpose. Mr. Canning, after skirmishing with the opposition by a kind of light infantry argument, towards the close of his speech indulges that propensity to satire and sarcasm, which rendered him afterwards so annoying to his opponents, and so acceptable to his less brilliant coadjutors. In the present instance he did not escape the severe animadversions of an honourable member, who felt that sarcasm was misapplied when it was employed to pour contempt upon the efforts of generosity which had been made in behalf of an oppressed and injured people. It seems Mr. Canning had condemned with some flippancy the inconsistent sophistry of certain gentlemen, who while they subscribed for Poland, were indifferent to the call then made upon the country in behalf of its own government. Mr. Francis felt this

remark to be a reflection and an insult, and he repelled it by showing, that the reasons why he entered into that subscription were that he thought it was constitutional, legal, and honourable to the character of the nation. When he refused a contribution to his own country, it was because the mode of application for that contribution was *unconstitutional;* he therefore had no right to do it. It was also *unnecessary*, which was an additional reason. So long as it was the peculiar privilege of the house of commons to do the business, he should certainly think it unnecessary. The young gentleman who had just escaped from his school and his classics, and was not yet conversant in the laws and constitution of his country, had imprudently delivered sentiments which tended to degrade him, and lower him in the opinion of the world. (*Call to order.*) He said he meant nothing personal to the honourable gentleman, but merely to express his abhorrence of such sentiments; and that he was the more sorry they should come from a young man, being so much unlike the candour and liberality which it was usual to meet with at his time of life.

The close of Mr. Canning's speech on this occasion is too characteristic to be omitted. "Gentlemen," he said, "had thought proper to employ a good deal of whining cant in speaking of the misfortunes of war. Their sensitive feelings would not permit them to bear the idea even of destroying that beautiful system, that delightful government, distinguished for its humanity, philanthropy, and religion, which at the present time prevailed in France. If the house were to look into the history of the human heart, they would see, that, like nations, where ambition was its primary

object, anarchy and confusion must ensue; if it were the object of this country to make peace, it must wish for the establishment of monarchy, *which government always tended to uniform mildness and universal advantage.* The conduct of government, proceeding from their wishes to aid the loyalists at La Vendée, was, to say the least of it, laudable in the extreme; their object was monarchy, which the history of the world must convince them was the *sine quâ non* of peace. He lamented the niggardliness of ministers that did not suffer them to grant all the papers required by opposition. The list of killed and wounded, if laid on the table, would doubtless afford ample room for feeling declamation. It would be shocking to find that saltpetre, dug from the bowels of the earth, should lay so many fine fellows low. A learned gentleman (Mr. Jekyll) in contemplating the list, might say, if it were not 'for these vile guns, I would myself be a soldier.' Mr. Canning declared, he did not think it an unfair argument to examine the conduct of administration during the campaign, and contrast it with that which opposition, were they in power, would probably have held. We should have a peace with France, and should cement the alliance with the blood of kings. We should be at war with Russia, Austria, and Prussia. We should have conspired against the liberties of Poland, and have plunged that country into a war. They who subscribed towards the support of that country, while they denied subscriptions towards the preservation of their own, would have shown themselves her determined enemies. Instead of passing the alien bill, and the act for protecting French property in our funds, we should have our towns

filled with French citizens; and in the place of English bank notes, our cities would be swarming with French assignats."

On the 17th of the same month, on the question of the suspension of the habeas corpus act, a question then comparatively new to parliament, and in the highest degree alarming to the British people, Mr. Canning's great zeal in excusing the absence of the premier drew down upon himself the sarcastic rebuke of Mr. Sheridan, who observed that "the chancellor of the exchequer's presence was certainly unnecessary; for those with whom he had the honour of acting on the present occasion were determined to be found at their posts, at the earliest and the latest hour. If the honourable gentleman (Mr. Canning) merely rose to prolong time by speaking, his speech was a very short one; if he intended it as an apology for the absence of his right honourable friend, it was one of the poorest he had ever heard."

The pretext urged for suspending the constitution, and placing in the hands of the ministers the power of imprisoning either the best or the worst men in the country, according to their individual caprice or personal enmities, without subjecting them to the slightest responsibility, or entitling the sufferers to the common privileges of Englishmen, was the alleged disaffection of the people to the government, and the determination of various self-constituted societies to procure, by open and constitutional means, a reform in the commons house of parliament. The nation was filled with astonishment when they heard the first imputation; for, as to disaffection to the government, it was notorious that no government was ever

more heartily supported by the public voice than that which was then in operation? and as to the proceedings of the corresponding and other similar societies, however objectionable they might be in some particulars, and, whatever suspicion they might warrant of the ultimate designs of some of the members who were most actively engaged in them, they were not of a nature either to excite alarm, or to justify any other measures than a prudent vigilance and an appeal to the existing laws, which were fully sufficient to meet every case of delinquency whenever it might occur. The friends of the constitution in parliament were deeply incensed at this daring attempt upon the liberties of the people, more especially as the minister, who was so eager to carry it, had himself set the example of all that he professed to condemn; and in fact lighted the torch which he now wished to extinguish in blood. Mr. (now Earl) Grey, in terms of bitter reproach and scorn, arraigned this cruel inconsistency on the part of the right honourable the premier. "What," said he, "was the conduct of the minister in the year 1782, when his pretended sincerity for a parliamentary reform had been defeated in that house, by a motion for the order of the day? He had abandoned it for ever. William Pitt, the reformer of that day, was William Pitt, the prosecutor, ay, and persecutor too, of reformers now. He who thought fit to inflame the passions of the people, and to instigate them to a contempt for the house of commons then, would not at present allow the people to judge of their own rights and dearest interests, but persecuted, with the real bitterness of an apostate, his partner in the question of parliamentary reform. He had that very day been examining as a prisoner John

Horne Tooke, for persevering in his sentiments. This same William Pitt, who had once taught the public to believe that nothing honest was to be expected from the house of commons, and that the people should do every thing for themselves, now insisted that the people should do nothing for themselves, but should submit implicitly to the house of commons the right even of their personal freedom."

"If any evils," Mr. Grey continued, "had arisen from the doctrine of applying to the people, instead of applying to parliament, the chancellor of the exchequer, he would confidently assert, had been the chief cause of those evils. He would ask, in what country, or in what societies, were factious men not to be found? If such were frequent, were they more so than corrupt and vicious ministers, who, in pursuing the increase or preservation of their ill-gotten power, trampled upon all rights and violated all duties? If the one description of men were to be found, how true was it, that they were in general produced by the ill-timed and malevolent severities of the other! It was asserted that these societies, with the word reform in their mouths, aimed in their hearts at overturning the constitution; and this assertion was grounded upon an expression of theirs, that a reform was not to be hoped from that house, but from the people. What was the object of these people? 'Their ostensible object,' said the minister, 'is parliamentary reform; but their real object is the destruction of the government of this country.' How was that explained? 'By the resolutions,' said the minister, 'of these persons themselves; for they do not talk of applying to parliament, but of applying to

the people themselves, for the purpose of obtaining a parliamentary reform.' If that language were criminal," Mr. Grey observed, "he was himself one of the greatest criminals. He did not scruple to assert, that from the house of commons he had no hopes of a parliamentary reform; that he had no hope of reform but from the people themselves; that that house would never reform itself, or destroy the corruption by which it was supported, by any other means than those of the resolutions of the people, acting on the prudence of that house, and on which the people ought to resolve. That point they could only accomplish by meeting in bodies. Such was the language of the minister in 1782; but he did not know what his sentiments were now, for who could know the sentiments of an apostate, who had no rule for his guidance but his own conscience?"

"An hon. member (Mr. Windham) had, upon a former debate, asserted that the doctrine of universal suffrage was only fitted for the refuse of the people; it might be so; but if it were so, of that description precisely were William Pitt and the Duke of Richmond. The duke had been the advocate for universal suffrage; and in support of that doctrine, the right honourable gentleman had been most strenuous. In proof of this assertion, he quoted the duke's letter to Colonel Sharman, wherein he had laid it down, 'that attempts at a partial reform had been so often and so vainly made in the house of commons, that nothing more was to be expected in that quarter, and that all reform, if ever it took place, was to be looked for from the people alone.' These were the sentiments of the Duke of Richmond at that time; but he had accom-

panied these sentiments with a plan precisely what the societies now recommended—universal suffrage and annual representation. What then had these persons done more than the chancellor of the exchequer and the Duke of Richmond? And what had those victims, Messrs. Muir and Palmer, the severity of whose punishments would force even apathy itself to exclaim, said or done more than this to expose them to their present sufferings? Had the papers of the Duke of Richmond been seized on that occasion, and had it been moved thereon to suspend the *habeas corpus* act, would it have been borne for a moment? and yet the only difference was, that those who then sat on one side of the house, at present sat on the other."

Enlisted on the side of his right honourable patron, flattered by him for his talents, and expecting from him something more substantial than flattery, and at the same time a young man somewhat confident in his own powers, and more ardent than discreet, we are not to wonder that Mr. Canning became on this occasion the incautious and intemperate advocate of his master. He contended vehemently for the measure before the house. In his oratorical way, he exclaimed, "Good God! how could gentlemen oppose a measure that was so obviously necessary!" In reply to what had been stated by the opposition, that if time were given, petitions would crowd from all parts of the country, and cover the table of the house, Mr. Canning took occasion to express his contempt both for the right and its exercise: he declared that he was not to be intimidated by petitions from any quarter, as long as he was convinced that he acquitted himself justly as a representative of the people, for the benefit of his country. He

felt himself so far, in a high and exalted situation, paramount to any such consideration; and as long as he exercised the authority delegated to him, consistent with the dictates of his conscience, he was not to be biassed by any instructions, let them flow from whatever quarter they might. Mr. Canning then adverted to the conduct of the chancellor of the exchequer, when he had stood forward an advocate for parliamentary reform: what he thought on that subject at present signified but little. He, however, entertained the same opinions with his right honourable friend: he supported him in those opinions, and *he agreed with him* "*that though such a reform might not be improper for discussion in time of peace, yet it was a proposition that ought not to be agitated in times of tumult and storm.*" This was not a period when gentlemen should take a partial view of a subject; they should not look to a part, but the whole. The observations which had been made on the supposed political apostacy of his right honourable friend had no relation to the question in debate, and were in themselves so weak and futile as to be hardly worth attention; though, perhaps, it would become him to consider the advantages which would result from this measure, contrasted with the evils which might arise from the loudly threatened secession of the honourable gentleman and his associates, he himself had no hesitation to declare, *that if the chancellor of the exchequer in future should return to his former opinion, it was probable that he might again agree with him.* If ministers were to proceed in this business, they were threatened with the vengeance of the people, and parliament was menaced

with the diminution of its members; but he did not perceive the direful consequences that would result to the country if such threats were carried into execution. He was of opinion, that any such secession would be counterbalanced by the good that must arise to the nation from carrying into effect the judicious measure submitted to the consideration of the house. With regard to the people, he had a better opinion of their good sense, than those who supposed that they could not distinguish their friends: they had been put to the proof by the public subscriptions proposed by ministers; and however that measure was decried, it was found that their pulse beat in unison with that of government. Mr. Canning concluded by observing, that however HE, *with his friend*, might be threatened with secessions in the house, and disturbances abroad, yet they would never be brought to consider themselves as ambassadors from foreign states; but should continue to know and feel their own dignity, and wait for the subsequent approbation of the people. In ordinary times, it was the duty of the house to see that every part of the constitution was kept in repair, but now it was their duty to protect the whole. He knew that the members of that house were considered as the best guardians and protectors of the people; with whom every pulse and artery moved in unison with those of parliament.

Either this last assertion of the honourable gentleman must have been unfounded, or his argument, for taking away the liberties of the people, on the plea of their disaffection, was no better than a flimsy sophistry or a self-evident contradiction. It was pretty well

understood, both in the house and out of doors, that while the chancellor of the exchequer was minister of the crown, the embryo barrister that had just sprung up into a statesman was the minister of the chancellor. Some went so far as to stigmatize him as the minister's minion. Mr. Courtenay commenced his speech in the debate in question with an ironical eulogium on the brilliant abilities of Mr. Canning: he admired them, he said, exceedingly; but he did not know whether he most admired the arguments he displayed, or the ingenuity with which he defended his right honourable friend, the chancellor of the exchequer. An honourable friend of his, Mr. Grey, had pointed out a fact, and the honourable gentleman had confessed it, by admitting that the minister was an apostate, and, through complaisance, had declared that he himself was one also. He had declared his friend guilty, and taken guilt upon his own shoulders. He had continued (Mr. Courtenay observed) by professing, that he participated in his right honourable friend's disgrace, and pleased himself, that if he should hereafter resume his former principles, he should incur the same penalty. The honourable gentleman seemed attached to his friend, as necessary, probably, to promote his fortune:

> "Thus a light straw, whirl'd round with every blast,
> Is carried off in some dog's tail at last."

It was on this occasion that Mr. Fox delivered one of the most luminous and impressive of his speeches. An air of melancholy, however, pervades it throughout, and it is remarkable for displaying, in an incidental paragraph, his tender and affectionate regret

at the loss of friends as one of the most painful sacrifices which duty sometimes exacts from feeling. A noble lord near him (Lord George Cavendish) had, in very affecting terms, deplored the circumstance, that in the present moment he differed from men so near and dear to his heart, as to make him feel it like differing from himself; so he might say, that, for some of those persons, though he had no ties of consanguinity, he felt so sincere a regard, and so poignant a regret, at differing from them, as to make it like a parting from himself. His early habits of respect, his warm affections, all led him to that feeling: but the present was not a time to compliment men, or to shrink from the severe duties which conscience imposed, by recollections of tenderness and esteem.

At the opening of the next session of parliament, on the 30th of December, 1794, Mr. Canning had the honour of seconding the address in answer to the king's speech. Notwithstanding the change which had taken place in the government of France, from furious jacobinism to a comparative moderatism, both the speech and the address breathed only of war; and Mr. Wilberforce observed, that it was impossible for any gentleman to vote for the latter, who did not go to the full length of declaring, that we must be at war, except there is a counter revolution in France. As Mr. Canning, in a former session, had maintained that monarchy was essential to the peace of every country in Europe, and that there could not be tranquillity for the continent, nor for Great Britain, while the government of France, or of any other great power, was republican; he was certainly a very fit organ of the minister, in upholding an address, which

maintained the same principle. With the exception of a treaty of commerce and amity with America, the only cheering topic to the nation (alas! how blind to the future are both nations and individuals), which the speech and the address referred to, was the proposed marriage of the Prince of Wales with the Princess Caroline of Brunswick: briefly dismissing these, in seconding the address, Mr. Canning observed, that "with regard to other parts of his Majesty's speech, he was aware, that to expect a complete coincidence of opinion would be vain and fruitless; he had some hopes, however, that, for one night, gentlemen would consent to lay aside their differences, and, unanimously, concur in the address which had just been moved." After defending his majesty's ministers against the imputation of the calamities and disasters of the war being the result of their ignorance and mismanagement, Mr. Canning, as usual, eagerly opens his fire upon the opposition, which, in this instance it must be acknowledged, was not the very best method of securing that unanimous concurrence in the address, which he appeared in the outset so anxious to obtain. In ridiculing the warnings and predictions of the gentlemen on the other side of the house, Mr. Canning said, "It was true, that they had foretold the desertion of our allies, and the astonishing exertions of the enemy, and he could not but confess, that unfortunately the result had justified the prediction. Here, however, he wished to observe, that it was no difficult matter to prophesy disappointment and ill success: if the prediction proved false, gentlemen would feel too much satisfaction in the success of their country to think of the prediction; if it proved true, those who

made it would triumph, as they would certainly feel some satisfaction in their superior sagacity.

"When he thus candidly gave credit to those gentlemen for their predictions, he wished it might not be forgotten, that some predictions had been made by ministers, and those who supported the war, which had been equally justified by the event. That government, which existed in France, and which had been represented as perfectly stable and secure, had been stated by gentlemen, on this side of the house, to be so constructed, that it could not possibly exist for any length of time. When Robespierre was in the height of his power, when he governed France with the most absolute sway, and when his will was received throughout France as law, even then his fall was predicted; with how much justice the event had shown. When jacobinism was at its greatest height; when its influence circulated through every part of the French government; when it seemed as the very source of motion in all their enterprises, even then its fall was foretold in that house, and, happily for humanity, with truth. He wished, however, not to be misunderstood. He did not mean that, by the accession of the moderates to the sovereign power in France, the possibility of our treating with them had become greater, because the only difference between them and the jacobins was, that they professed the intentions, though they had not the power of the jacobins: the hostility of the moderates to this country was equal to that of the jacobins; the only difference was, they had not the means of carrying it into execution.

"With regard to the present system of moderation, he was far from thinking that it was at all propitious

to the interest of this country. He admitted that they did not carry on that wholesale trade in blood which had marked the reign of the jacobins. They were occupied in the more *innocent* employments of balancing accounts, and adjusting to each man his share of murder and of guilt.

"The house would have an opportunity of judging what reliance we could have upon their moderation, by the terms which they would give to the Dutch, who were not the instigators of the war, but falling under the class of those who were compelled to join in it. If the terms which they gave to the Dutch were hard, what could this country expect, who were supposed to be the more determined to carry on the war, and whom the French, upon all occasions, seemed to speak of with peculiar enmity and inveterate malevolence? If we could even now have a peace with France, it would be an insecure one; it must be a peace with all the inconveniences and expenses of a war establishment. Such a peace, he was sure, this country would never assent to; and therefore he hoped he should divide with a very large majority for the address. Even if we were to have a peace with any sort of security, it could not be obtained without continuing to keep up a war establishment; and could it be supposed that the French would suffer us to keep up such an establishment without demanding an explanation, which would, of course, produce dissensions? With regard to the general observation, at what time were we to think of negociating for peace? he would answer, that must be governed by future circumstances; for the question was not, whether we should negociate at any time? but whether, under all the cir-

cumstances, we would negociate now? He maintained, that, from the commencement of the French revolution down to the present time, there was no stability in its government; nor could there be any under the present system of its rulers: every day afforded some new change. He maintained, that the very energy of its military power was a proof that it could not be of long continuance; for even the armies, which had performed such prodigies, had fought, under every commander, only under an idea that they were fighting against order and established government: and he was persuaded, that the moment such a form of government was established in France as would be fit for us to negociate with, and when we began to negociate, the system under which their army fought would be at an end, and they would lay down their arms. These were the points which constituted the real weakness of the French. We were happily the reverse of all this. On our strength and their weakness, therefore, he relied. He observed, that it was a duty which we owed to every established government of Europe, as well as to our own happiness, to continue the present contest; for, if we did not persist now, we must inevitably fall, and with us all Europe. The hostility of this country had already produced many changes for the better in France, and there was reason to hope that a continuance of the war would bring them to a state in which we could make peace with honour and security."

The minister and his friends were this evening thrown into consternation by opposition from a quarter upon which they had little reckoned. Mr. Wilberforce and his party, who had uniformly up to this

period supported the strongest measures of government, and whose confidence in the premier bordered almost upon superstitious reverence, rose up on a sudden, alarmed at the terrible doctrines which had been promulgated from the throne, and reiterated from the ministerial side of the house. A perpetual war, which could only cease with the restoration of the French monarchy, or with the total ruin of their own country, was a startling proposition, which at once shocked their principles and appalled their feelings. Mr. Wilberforce was the first to rise. He deprecated both the speech and the address, and observed of Mr. Canning, that "the honourable gentleman who had just sat down, hurried away by his own eloquence, had made assertions which it was impossible to maintain, and had asked questions which it was unfortunately but too easy to answer." Mr. Wilberforce then took an extensive view of the comparative state of both countries, after a long and sanguinary conflict, in which both had been sufferers in no ordinary degree, and concluded by moving an amendment to the address. The manner in which this amendment was supported, and the sentiments uttered by many who were supposed to be governed by the minister, failed not deeply to wound the pride of Mr. Pitt, and to awaken him to the conviction that the charm of his influence was broken. Indeed he could not conceal his displeasure and chagrin. He rose early in the debate, and addressed himself earnestly and pathetically to the new raised opposition. It is thus he addresses the speaker at the commencement of his speech: "Sir, the reasons that have induced gentlemen to dissent from the prosecution of the war seem

to have possessed a considerable influence on the manner in which they speak of the justice and necessity of the war at its commencement; and their language is fainter and feebler than I had reason to expect. Contending, as these gentlemen and I did, with the new and monstrous system of cruelty, anarchy, and impiety, against those whose principles trampled upon civilized society, religion, and law; contending, I say, with such a system, I could not have entertained the slightest expectation that from them would have proceeded such an amendment. It has pleased inscrutable Providence, that this power of France should trample over every thing that has been opposed to it; but let us not, therefore, fall without making any efforts to resist it—let us not sink without measuring its strength. If any thing could make me agree to retire from the contest, it would be the consciousness of not being able to continue it. I would at least have no cause to reproach myself on the retrospect. I would not yield till I could exclaim,

> —— Potuit quæ plurima virtus
> Esse, fuit; toto certatum est corpore regni.

"If, Sir, I have expressed myself with more emotion than is consistent with the propriety of debate, the particular situation in which I stand, opposing and contesting the opinions of those with whom I have been, on all occasions, in almost all points, fortunate enough to agree, will, I trust, excuse the warmth of my feelings."

In the March following, at the great trial of strength between the ministers and the opposition, on the state of the nation, Mr. Canning followed Mr. Sheridan, who had replied to the chancellor of the

exchequer. Mr. Fox's introductory speech was indeed one of transcendent ability; he exceeded himself. His effort was characterised by his illustrious opponent, as one "of the most eloquent speeches ever delivered in that house." His own was scarcely less powerful, and Mr. Sheridan, if less playful and brilliant than was his wont, lost nothing of his former reputation as a first-rate parliamentary orator. The state of Ireland, which Mr. Fox had made only a collateral subject of discussion, the chancellor of the exchequer treated as if it had been introduced by his opponent as a question of fundamental importance, and leaving the strongest positions in the speech of Mr. Fox untouched, he directed the greatest part of his argument and declamation against the agitation of this point. Mr. Canning followed his patron in the same course; and in this speech we have the first recorded sentiments of the right honourable gentleman on a question on which he subsequently so greatly distinguished himself as the advocate of just and liberal principles. It is evident that at this time he adroitly avoided all recognition of these principles. He speaks of Ireland, and of the critical state of its affairs, but deprecates all interference, on the part of the English parliament, to settle the unhappy differences which were at that moment throwing the sister country into the greatest confusion. Mr. Canning's speech was in reply to Mr. Sheridan. He began by observing, "that, after the speeches which they had already heard, he should not presume to detain them any longer than while he remarked on a few observations which had been made by his honourable friend, who had just sat down. Those observations had been

chiefly directed to establish two points; first, that the affairs of Ireland were not the only new topic which had been urged, to prove the necessity of going into a new committee; secondly, that if they were the only cause, they would of themselves be a *sufficient* cause for going into it. With neither of these positions of his honourable friend Mr. Canning had the honour to agree. He still retained the opinion with which he had come into the house; an opinion which had been confirmed in his mind by the speech of the right honourable gentleman who made the motion, which had been already expressed by his right honourable friend, Mr. Pitt, and which prevailed, he believed, pretty generally both in that house and with the public; that, but for the state in which affairs now are in Ireland, we should have heard nothing this day of the necessity of such a committee as had been proposed: and he still thought also, that the existence of that critical state of affairs, so far from being a reason for acceding to the proposed committee, was decisive for refusing it.

"He was very far from meaning to contend against the right of the English parliament to call the ministers of the crown to account for their conduct with respect to Ireland, as a component part of the empire. But he *did* mean to express a very strong doubt of the *policy* and *propriety* of exercising that right at a period when it could not be exercised to any beneficial or rational effect, without bringing the internal and independent concerns of the sister kingdom into question, and thus reducing us to the dilemma, either of discussing what we had no power to decide, or of deciding what we had no right to enforce.

"The question of the Roman catholic emancipation appeared, as far as we could judge from report, (and he begged leave to remind the house, that it was upon report alone that we were called upon to take up the inquiry), to be intimately connected with the present situation of Irish affairs, and to involve in itself the justification or condemnation of one or other of his majesty's ministers. Whichever it might be that, in the end, should appear culpable or innocent, how difficult would it be to come to any conclusion upon *their* conduct, without coming, *by the way*, to some declaration of opinion upon the catholic question? And whatever that opinion might be, how could a member of the British house of commons, on the one hand, consent to degrade that house to a mere *debating club*, deliberating and deciding without effect? Or what friend of Irish independence, on the other hand, could tamely suffer a vote of the British parliament to anticipate the judgment, and dictate the decision, of the legislature of Ireland upon a subject so nearly and so exclusively connected with the rights and interests of their country?

"For these reasons he was against going into the committee upon the affairs of Ireland; and other reasons he had heard none, except such as have already been repeatedly brought before the house, and solemnly disposed of. The army, the navy, the war, in its rise, object, principle, and conduct, had already been the subjects of frequent discussion. One object, indeed, the honourable gentleman had avowed, which would no doubt have its due weight with many who sat near him, but, he trusted, with no great proportion of the house or of the country besides,—the immediate removal of the present administration. And he had

stated, as a peculiar defect in the constitution of this country, that *here*, and here only, of all the countries in the world, would it be *possible* for a minister to continue in office after such repeated failures and disasters.

"This *defect*, if such it must be called, is obviously one that grows out of the peculiar freedom of this constitution, and out of the share which the people take in the public affairs and political conduct of government. In arbitrary governments, where there is no intercourse between the executive power and the people, where the latter have no insight into the proceedings of the state, but are left to judge merely from the event how far they may have been wisely designed, or honestly conducted, it is no wonder that they should consider every failure as a crime, and demand a victim for every disaster. But in free and enlightened states, where the people have an opportunity of tracing every proceeding of the government, where they go as it were hand in hand with their representatives, and their representatives with the ministers, through every stage of an undertaking, they certainly do not wait for the event before they stamp it with their approbation, and certainly do not insist upon punishing those who have the conduct of it, while they can assign reasons to themselves in exculpation of a failure.

"Another object which the honourable gentleman wished to accomplish in this committee, or which it is at least natural enough for him to state to the house, as in stating it he can indulge himself in much pleasantry against gentlemen on this side of the house, and probably without a serious answer, is, that a tax should be laid, similar to one which it seems has lately

been laid in Spain, of 5*s.* in the pound on all places and pensions.

"When we are called upon to *imitate* Spain in this particular, it is somewhat surprising that gentlemen should not be aware that Spain has done no more than *imitate* us. A tax of the same nature exists in this country already, and to a larger amount than 5*s.* in the pound (a cry of 'No, no!' from the opposition). Mr. Canning stated, that the land-tax, and other taxes together, made, he believed, about 5*s.* 6*d.* in the pound; but he would not quarrel with them about the odd 6*d*; he would say only to a similar amount; and he would ask of gentlemen who seemed inclined to push the principle to a further extent, whether they seriously thought by doing so to add weight to the popular and democratic part of the constitution? and if they did, he should have no hesitation in affirming, that the tendency of it would be directly the reverse; that it would go to unpopularise the constitution in the most eminent degree; to throw all power into the hands of the rich, and to exclude from situations of trust and service in the country all those whose talents or whose virtues might want the aid of birth and fortune to introduce them. The wages of office, and the remuneration for past services bestowed on those who have served the state with credit, may be indeed very easily put in a ridiculous light; they may be liable to abuse and misapplication. But the principle from which they are derived is nevertheless that which pervades and equalises the classes of society, by enabling the state to avail itself of the talents of all its citizens, which opens as wide the doors of the senate-house, and of the cabinet, to acquired eminence and plebeian

worth, as to ancestral dignity and patrician virtue. The honourable gentleman had concluded his speech with an accusation against ministers of rather an extraordinary nature; that they have never stated what their wishes were as to the form of government that should be erected in France; for which reason he supposes them to wish that the old despotism might be restored in all its horrors; and, moreover, that a similar despotism might gradually grow upon this country. At the same time he had professed himself most eagerly to wish that a republican form of government might be established in France, defying any person to infer from thence that he had the smallest desire to see republicanism prevailing in this country. With these wishes of his honourable friend, or any other that he might entertain, he (Mr. Canning) apprehended nobody was disposed to meddle, or to draw any inference from them of what sense or nature soever. He could not, however, but complain a little, that the candour which his honourable friend insisted on having used towards himself, he should not, in the first instance, have thought it fair to extend to others. If it would be uncandid to conclude from his *acknowledged preference* for are public, one and indivisible, in France, that he would gladly transplant the same form of government to England; it seemed at least *equally* uncandid to infer from ministers *acknowledging no preference at all* (which is his accusation against them), that they *therefore* necessarily desire an aggravated despotism both abroad and at home. But whatever might be the opinions or wishes of individuals, or the inferences to be drawn from them, they appeared to him to lay no more ground than any other of the

arguments which had been advanced for going into committee. He should, therefore, without trespassing longer on the time of the house, give his vote for the adjournment."

On the twenty-ninth of the October of this year, and just three days after a general meeting of the London Corresponding Society had been held in the fields near Copenhagen-house, which, though consisting of an immense multitude, conducted itself with unexampled decorum, and separated without the least confusion or tumult, his majesty, on his way to the house of lords, to open the parliament which had been prorogued from June to that day, was exposed to the most imminent peril from the atrocious violence of a desperate mob of ruffians, who gathered around the state-carriage as it was proceeding through St. James's park. Coupling these two events together, and taking advantage of the public feeling so universally excited by the latter, the minister introduced into the house of commons his next premeditated attack upon the whole liberties of the people of England. It was grounded on a number of petitions got up on the spur of the occasion, and calling upon parliament to the speedy adoption of measures that should put a stop to seditious meetings. This act, for the passing of which these petitions furnished a pretext, was directed against all meetings of the people for discussion and inquiry on the subject of their rights and grievances. The mob in the park which assailed his majesty were identified with the peaceable and orderly multitude that had assembled in Copenhagen-fields, while there was no possible circumstance that, in the form of evidence, could be adduced to prove

the slightest connexion between them. The probability was, that the sanguinary ruffians that were guilty of the treason against the king's person were quite as hostile to the freedom of the nation. When a government condescends to employ spies in great numbers, and who, from their very vocation, must be the most abandoned of mankind, it ought to be able to restrain them from creating the offence which is often made the subject of their nefarious informations. At the meeting near Copenhagen-house, a hand-bill had been industriously circulated, entitled "King-Killing no Murder." Three days afterwards the king was assailed in his state-coach. Now, it may be very natural to connect the hand-bill with the incipient regicides, and there was very probably a most intimate and direct connexion between them. The only difficulty was to connect both or either with the London Corresponding Society; nor was it possible to overcome this difficulty: yet the minister and his supporters boldly assumed the fact as incontrovertible. Mr. Sheridan, indeed, maintained that the whole must have been the fabrication of some person who wished to bring the society into discredit. He remembered, he said, a circumstance similar, which took place in "the Society of Friends of Freedom." A person who, from his violence, was suspected of being a spy, contrived to extinguish the lights, when a great number of hand-bills was thrown about the room, of a seditious and inflammatory nature. Upon the lights being restored, and the hand-bills read, the society expressed their abhorrence of this transaction, and their disapprobation of the hand-bills; and they used every endeavour to dis-

cover the authors of them, who were probably the government reporters. Was it, he asked, fitting that the house should assume the fact of such hand-bills being published by the Corresponding Society, and, upon that assumption, should pass acts, which, in their extent, affected the whole kingdom? Mr. Canning, however, rose to support the bill. "That there was an intimate connexion between the proceedings at Copenhagen-house, and the disgraceful outrage which followed, he said, was so obvious, that he professed himself astonished that any man, possessed of common powers of reason, should doubt it. An attempt had been made against the king, and a doctrine was preached on the practice of 'king-killing.' The doctrine was preached, and the attempt was made. The design of the speakers was not disguised; they publicly declaimed against majesty and government. He did not then see how gentlemen could be so blind to plain and evident facts; they wanted to disguise what the declaimers and orators had no idea of concealing. If, then, the attack on our most gracious sovereign immediately followed the circulation of such abominable doctrine, he did not see how the connexion could be discredited. There was a plea used, it is true, that they were assembled for the purpose of petitioning parliament; but this, it was easy to perceive, was only a pretext to mislead."

It was thus that Mr. Canning uniformly supported every favourite measure of Mr. Pitt, and it is deeply to be regretted that his favourite measures, at that period, were levelled against the most sacred bulwarks of the constitution; and though these measures were carried by large majorities, the necessity for any one

of them was never established. Mr. now Earl Grey, in bearing his protest against the bill, so strenuously upheld by Mr. Canning, observed, "His own feelings on the subject were, that the bill was unnecessary, because the laws already in existence appeared to him fully sufficient to repress the evil. If ministers had neglected to prosecute those who had basely made an attack upon the life of our sovereign, was that a reason why all the liberties of the people of England should be taken from them?"

It must be confessed, that these specimens of Mr. Canning's early efforts in parliament afford very little promise of his after celebrity. It has been gravely maintained, that at this period, as a parliamentary speaker, Mr. Canning made Mr. Burke his model; that his admiration of the genius of this wonderful man, together with his being his pupil in all the political doctrines by which, at the close of his public life, he hoped to purify himself from the taint of whiggism, by the inflammatory counteraction of a tory furor, which made him eloquently, profoundly, and divinely mad, had awakened in the youthful statesman the passion of imitation, which he carried to the excess of copying a style and manner, utterly dissimilar to his own, and suited only to a grave and philosophical elocution, which addresses itself to the intellect more than to the passions, and seeks to convince rather than to persuade. It is certain, however, that there are no traces of resemblance between any thing we have yet seen of Mr. Canning's oratory and that of Mr. Burke. Hitherto we have detected no spirit of generalization; no mighty grasp of a subject; no enlarged capacity to take into

view all that bears upon a question, or that tends to its elucidation, nothing, in fact, of its philosophy. The speeches we have yet read are those of the advocate and the partisan; of the dexterous debater, who is resolved to annoy whom he cannot conciliate, and to rouse into exultation the party whose cause he undertakes to uphold. *We* see him, it is true, after the lapse of so many years, in the distance; and the obscurities of time throw a shade around him which we are not able to penetrate. But Mr. Pitt, who was no mean judge of men, saw in him a potent and ready instrument of his will: he selected him from among many competitors and rivals, and continued to regard him with a high and distinguished preference to the day of his death. We may also add, that the subsequent course of his *protegé* fully justified his choice.

CHAPTER III.

From Mr. Canning's accepting Office till his Retirement with Mr. Pitt in 1801—His Speeches in Parliament—His Marriage —His Contributions to the Anti-Jacobin Examiner.

In the new parliament of 1796, Mr. Canning was returned for *Wendover*, Bucks; and, in the first sessions of that parliament he appeared in his official character as one of the under secretaries of state, to which he was appointed by the premier. Besides the vulgar prejudice entertained against placemen

who also occupy seats in parliament, Mr. Canning had to contend with a reproach, most unsparingly cast upon him in the house of commons, that his predecessor had been superannuated on a pension, to make way for his introduction into office, and at a period of life, when, in addition to long experience of the duties he had to perform, he was in the full vigour and maturity of his faculties. Fortunately we have Mr. Canning's defence on both these topics; the one he triumphantly met in a speech, delivered many years after, to his constituents at Liverpool, in which he showed the absurdity of excluding men in office from a seat in parliament; and the other he answered at the time, to the discomfiture of his assailant; and that assailant was no less a man than Mr. Fox. We shall notice the latter first. Mr. Fox, after having adverted to the sinecures of Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville, with which they had provided themselves, when they were loading the people with an accumulated weight of burthens, proceeded to impugn the arrangements in the secretary of state's office, by which Mr. Aust was removed from the situation he there held, though he was eminently qualified for holding it, and, at a time of life, when he was as fit for business as ever he had been, merely to provide for Mr. Canning, who could not do the business of the office till he was instructed in it by Mr. Aust.* Mr. Canning rose, and conceiving that some reflections had been thrown on the way in which he came into place, said, that the public had not been encumbered

* Debate on Mr. Harrison's motion for the reduction of useless places, &c. 1797.

with an additional expense on his account. Mr. Aust, whom he succeeded, had been appointed to other offices more lucrative; but his appointment had added no more expense to the public burdens. "If sordid views had been my object," said Mr. C. "I would rather have accepted those offices, which Mr. Aust now holds, than the station I fill."

The extract, which follows, from the speech at Liverpool, upon the former point, will be read with great interest, as it sets an important question for ever at rest, and will prevent the necessity of any further allusion to it in the course of these Memoirs.

Gentlemen, it was contended, that any man holding office, especially high and responsible office, was unfit, for that very reason, to become the representative of the people.—[Cries of "No! no!"] I state the argument, gentlemen, only for the purpose of answering it,—of expressing, though in much feebler language, the just and emphatic refutation which it has received in your unanimous denial.

Gentlemen, if there be truth in this doctrine of our adversaries, I have read the constitution wrong. For I have always thought, that it was one great practical security for the continuance of that freedom which we happily enjoy, and of which we should enjoy the name only if it were not imbodied in the political institutions of the country;—I have considered it always, I say, as one great security, that, though there be no written law which circumscribes the choice of the crown in the selection of its ministers, yet that, since England has been what it is, the Sovereign has always looked for his ministers among the members of the two houses of parliament.

Is it possible, gentlemen, that persons of so acute understandings as those who were arrayed against me to-day, should not see, that if a minister ought not to be a member of parliament, the converse would be equally true, that the crown ought not to choose a member of parliament for its minister? And what would be the consequence? That the house of lords, the he-

reditary counsellors of the crown, and hereditary representatives of the great mass of the property of the kingdom; that the house of commons, containing a selection, through various channels, and for various qualifications, of all that is most distinguished in talents, in property, and consideration, among the commons of the country; that these two bodies of men, necessarily, from their constitution, the flower of the kingdom, should be absolutely excluded from the management of the affairs of the state; and that the crown should be driven to look for its servants among those who could not obtain, or among those who had declined, the representation of the people!

I take for granted, gentlemen, that I do no injustice to the argument of my adversaries, when I assume, that it is meant to exclude members of the house of peers, equally with those of the other house of parliament, from office. If, indeed, they intend a distinction between the two houses, and would confine the offices of state to peers, pleasant candidates, to be sure, they are for popular favour, and nice adjusters of the balance of the constitution!

But there is another view which these gentlemen take of office,—as if it were something in itself dishonourable, something which did not imply or convey distinction, but absolute degradation and contamination. When they have said that a man holds office, or, still more, when, straining their faculties for ridicule and invective to the utmost pitch, they insinuate that he seeks it, they think that they have said all: the blow is struck, the work is done. Be it so. But let us see how far these gentlemen are consistent in their revilement of office. Is there no occasion on which they speak of it in another strain, and represent it in another light? Can they be the same persons whom you may have heard, on former occasions, declaiming against those laws by which a proportion of our fellow-subjects are excluded from office? They think, and, though I differ from many of you, gentlemen, in this opinion, I think with them, that these disqualifications should be removed. I have done my best to procure the removal of them. In this *I* am consistent. *I* think ineligibility to office a grievance, because I think office an honourable occupation. But what is the creed of our adversaries? They ought, in consistency, to consider

such ineligibility as a privilege rather than a privation. Is it tyranny to save a man from the danger of being degraded? Is it any thing but a wise and salutary restraint, to fence him round against the chance of contamination?

But, gentlemen, I rest my appeal to you both upon the theory and practice of the constitution. I do not come before you an apologist for having accepted office. When tendered to me on the part of my sovereign, it was my duty to accept it; unless I could assign sufficient public reasons for declining it, or felt in my own mind insuperable difficulties in acceptance. The country has, I conceive, a claim on the services of every man, according to the measure of his abilities. Of that measure he is not himself the proper judge; and the call of the sovereign is paramount, where there is no justifiable motive for a refusal.

During the sessions of 1796 and 1797, Mr. Canning chiefly confined his attention to the immediate and laborious duties which his office required. On a question, however, respecting the production of certain papers, the tardiness of his majesty's ministers having been severely censured by Mr. Grey, Mr. Canning took upon himself that part of the responsibility which devolved upon him; but he pointedly put it to his honourable censor—"As those higher in office, and better qualified to give the house any information upon the subject, were absent (from indisposition), he would ask the honourable gentleman, with that candour which was usually practised by one gentleman to another, to defer any motion till he saw the papers, when he might have an opportunity to move for whatever he judged necessary."

On Mr. Wilberforce's motion for the abolition of the slave trade in the following year, 1798, in which Mr. *Bryan Edwards* took a hostile part, Mr. Canning, in his reply to the latter gentleman, bursts upon us at once as the statesman, the orator, and

the philanthropist. Yet as this speech is so far exceeded by several, which were delivered subsequently on the same heart-rending subject, we shall content ourselves by merely recording the fact of its existence in the parliamentary reports of the day. But not in this cursory manner can we persuade ourselves to dismiss the masterpiece of eloquence by which, in the third session of this parliament, on Mr. Tierney's motion respecting peace with the French republic, Mr. Canning electrified the house, and inspired the country at large with the highest admiration of his talents. After an unusually dull and languid speech, Mr. Tierney stated the purport of his motion to be "That it is the duty of his majesty's ministers to advise his majesty, in the present crisis, against entering into engagements which may prevent or impede a negociation for peace, whenever a disposition shall be shown, on the part of the French republic, to treat on terms consistent with the security and interests of the British empire."

Mr. Canning, on the announcement of the motion thus introduced, rose, and said—

"If I might judge, sir, of the impression made by the hon. gentleman's speech from the manner in which it has been received, and particularly from the unusual degree of apathy and languor which has prevailed on that side of the house on which he sits, I should be led to believe, that the ardour manifested on this side of the house by my noble and hon. friends who rose at the same time with me, was, perhaps, more than the occasion required: and I assure you, sir, I should not have pressed myself upon your attention, if I had thought the occasion one which demanded abilities like theirs; if I had not felt, that what arguments I have to state in opposition to the hon. gentleman's motion, are so clear and plain in themselves, as to re-

quire little aid from any talents in the person who states them. The motion of the hon. gentleman cannot be denied to be of an extraordinary nature; and he has certainly treated it in a very extraordinary manner. I conceive it to be consonant as well to the rules of the house, as the reason of the thing, that the house should not be urged to the adoption of a new and unusual measure, without its being, in the first place, established, that there exists some necessity for adopting it, or that some advantage may be gained by doing so. I did expect, therefore, from the hon. gentleman, rather some solid reasons for the measure which he has proposed, than an anticipation of the objections which he thought might be urged against it. He has contented himself, however, with endeavouring to destroy the validity of several arguments which he has heard out of doors, and which he expects to hear to-night against the motion that he has made; but he has omitted, what seemed to me to be more peculiarly incumbent upon him, an explanation of the motives which induced him to make it. I admit that the hon. gentleman has been not unsuccessful in anticipating several of the most obvious and prominent objections against his motion; I cannot think that he has been equally fortunate in removing them. I shall certainly have occasion, in the course of what I have to say, to re-state many or most of those which he has anticipated, and not without the hope of establishing them to the conviction of the house. I shall follow him through these objections, as nearly as I can in the same order in which he has brought them forward.

"The first objection which he expects to hear, but upon which I am certainly not inclined to lay the greatest stress, is the point of constitutional form. It is by no means my intention to contend, that the nature of the hon. gentleman's motion, though extraordinary, is wholly unprecedented,—much less to deny the power and the right of the house of commons, to offer its advice to his majesty, on any subject, either of negociation, or of war. I know they have at several times interfered in both. It is, indeed, somewhat singular, that the hon. gentleman should not himself have cited any of the former instances of such an exercise of the right of parliament. Perhaps he has some recollection, that a peculiar sort of fatality has, in almost every

instance, seemed to attend interferences of this nature; that in almost every instance, from the Revolution to our own time, they have been either nugatory or mischievous. I will mention two only, out of the few that have occurred during this period: the first, that which was nearest, in point of time, to the Revolution; the other, that which is nearest to our own time: the first, an interference tending to prolong a war; the other, intended to accelerate a peace. The first, the warlike measure, was the famous vote of the house of lords in 1707, "That no peace could be safe or honourable which should leave Spain and the Spanish West Indies in the possession of the house of Bourbon." It is hardly necessary to remind gentlemen, that this vote, carried by the heat and violence of party, had no effect whatever; that no manner of regard was paid to it, in the peace which was afterwards negociated:—And, whatever might be the faults of that peace, or however loud the cry against the ministers who made it, I do not think that any man, who looks fairly and impartially at that peace now, will say, that it was any very great crime in those ministers, that they did omit to carry this vote into execution. The second example to which I refer, is the resolution voted by the house of commons, respecting the "Independence of America." Of a transaction so recent it is hardly possible to speak with the freedom of history. I speak, probably, in the presence of many who took part in favour of that revolution,—of some, certainly, who opposed it. Who were right, or who were wrong, I do not presume to determine. But in one thing, I believe, those who opposed and those who promoted it will equally concur,—that the vote which carried that resolution was an *unfortunate* vote; and that it had an influence fatal to the interest of this country, on the peace which concluded the American war. This is a proposition which those who had to make that peace must, I am sure, contend to be true; and which those who condemned that peace would find it difficult to deny.

"But whatever might be the force of precedents, they would not of themselves—even if their bearing was as much in favour of motions of this kind as unfortunately it has been against them,—they would not of themselves be sufficient to justify the hon. gentleman's motion. It would, I presume, be farther ne-

cessary for him to show (as was shown, or attempted to be shown, in all former instances) that some necessity at present exists, which calls for such an interference of the House of Commons. I can conceive such a necessity to arise only from one of two circumstances: either from the circumstance of some opening for peace now presenting itself, of which ministers do not show themselves enough disposed to take advantage;—or from ministers having at former periods evinced a disposition generally hostile to peace, which this motion is intended to censure or to control. That any such opening now exists, the hon. gentleman has not attempted to argue. I must, therefore, naturally have attributed his motion to a false impression remaining on his mind of the conduct of ministers in former negociations:—I must have conceived, that he retained a confused and perplexed recollection of what had passed at Lisle,—that he remembered something indistinctly of an embarrassment having been thrown in the way of the negociation by a question about allies,—but utterly forgot that the allies who created this embarrassment were the allies of France and not of Great Britain;—and that, under this mistake, he was bringing forward the restriction in the wrong place, and applying to this country a cure for the misconduct of the enemy. But I am prevented from admitting even this foundation for his proceeding, by the approbation which the hon. gentleman has expressed of the manifesto published by this government after the breaking off of the negociations at Lisle. The hon. gentleman distinctly and fairly acknowledges that manifesto to have exhibited undoubted proofs of the pacific dispositions of his majesty's ministers.

"And here give me leave to observe rather a singular argument, which grows out of the hon. gentleman's peculiar conduct and situation. He tells you that he brings forward this motion as an "unconnected and unsupported individual," acting with no party or set of men whatever. By agreeing to the motion, therefore, the advantage which we are to gain is his individual co-operation. It is hardly to be supposed that he will be more convinced of the pacific disposition of ministers after this resolution shall have been adopted, than he was after the publication of the manifesto, which he has so warmly commended. What was the first step that he took by way of co-operation after

that manifesto was published? *He voted against the supply.*—Convinced, that his majesty had done all in his power to obtain peace;—that he had gone almost beyond what could have been expected of him, in forbearance and moderation;—that he had shown, even after the victory of Lord Duncan, the most decided disposition to make peace, upon fair and reasonable terms;—convinced that the abrupt conclusion of the negociation at Lisle had been the act of the enemy exclusively;—that the continuance of the calamities of war was to be attributed to the arrogance, and wickedness, and pride, of the enemy alone;—that his majesty had no choice;—that he must of necessity continue to carry on a war, which the mad ambition of that enemy would not allow him to terminate;—in this conviction, to enable his majesty to carry on the war, the hon. gentleman "unconnected and unsupported," individually, *voted against the supply.* I do not mean to impeach the hon. gentleman's conduct in this instance. He had no doubt his reasons for it. But I do mean to put it to the judgment of the house, whether, if it should be evident (as I trust it will be) that no solid and general advantage is to be derived to the country from our agreeing to the hon. gentleman's resolution,—there is much temptation held out to us to do so, by the prospect of his future individual co-operation; whether it is worth while to adopt an unusual, unnecessary, and, much more, a mischievous measure to evince our desire for peace;—in order to secure the hon. gentleman's vote against the supply for carrying on the war. This, however, would certainly be a very inferior consideration, if there were any utility or advantage to be derived from the measure proposed. I have not heard the hon. gentleman state any advantage as likely to arise from it to the country. As he has affirmed nothing of this kind, I have nothing of the kind to deny. But there is one way of considering what is advantageous to this country, to which I confess I am very partial; and the rather, perhaps, because it does not fall in with the new and fashionable philosophy of the day. I know it is a doctrine of that large and liberal system of ethics which has of late been introduced into the world, and which has superseded all the narrow prejudices of the ancient school,—that we are to consider not so much what is good for our country, as what is good for the human race; that we are all

children of one large family;—and I know not what other fancies and philanthropies, which I must take shame to myself for not being able to comprehend. I, for my part, still conceive it to be the paramount duty of a British member of parliament to consider what is good for Great Britain: and where no immediate advantage is pointed out as obviously arising from any new measure that is proposed for our adoption,—I hold it no bad test to examine in what way it bears upon the interests of France, and to conclude, however unphilosophically, or illiberally, that what is good for the enemy, cannot be very good for us.

"Now, Sir, I beg to have it understood,—and I assure the hon. gentleman, that I am very far from meaning any thing personally disrespectful to him;—that I give him full credit for feeling, as strongly as any man, every thing that he owes to his country, for being as ready as any man to devote his talents and exertions to her service. I appeal, therefore, not to his feelings, but to his judgment and ingenuity,—when I desire him to consider, whether he could possibly devise any measure (capable, at the present moment, of being patiently entertained by this house or by the public) which should have a more direct and manifest tendency to benefit France, than the motion which he has now brought forward? What could any man—any member of this house (if it were possible to suppose that there should be such a member in this house), most perversely devoted to the views of the enemy, and bent upon exalting France at the expense of Great Britain,—what more effectual measure could such a man take for such a purpose, than by a motion like the present? For what is it that the French Directory appear, by all their conduct, by all their publications, to dread and deprecate more than any other thing in the world? What is it that all their official and unofficial papers most labour to discredit? What, but the revival of a great and general confederacy in Europe, of which England should be the animating soul? Why should we co-operate with the French Directory? What interest can we have in common with them, that should induce us to take their work out of their hands and complete it for them? What advantage can it be to us to daunt and dispirit Europe; and to relieve the Directory from the apprehensions of any powerful resistance, or

the necessity of any extensive preparation; to maintain their influence abroad, and their authority at home?

"I will put the question in another way. I will suppose that we were now in the last year of the monarchy of France, instead of the sixth or seventh year, or whatever it may be, of the French republic, one and indivisible. By the monarchy I mean, of course, that cruel, wicked, profligate, abominable despotism, of which we have heard so many, and, no doubt, so just complaints,—which oppressed France with I know not what unheard-of cruelties,—which insulted England, and desolated Europe, by crimes and calamities such as can never be imputed to the French republic. I will suppose that this monarchy had received so formidable a blow as has been given to the Directory by the victory of the Nile; that its fleets had been disgraced and defeated, in different expeditions against the British empire; that its fairest provinces were in revolt; that its subjects were universally discontented; that its commerce was extinguished; its revenue destroyed; and its finances, by the confessions of its ablest financiers, in a state of utter and irrecoverable ruin and bankruptcy; that against the monarchy, thus situated, a general spirit was rising in Europe: I will suppose that under these circumstances, the ministers of this country had come down to this house, and suggested the propriety of such a measure of abjuration and self-denial as is now under consideration: and I will ask, what would have been the clamour raised on the other side of the house?—how pointedly would the question have been put to ministers, "What are you doing? Why do you interfere to arrest the downfal of this detestable tyranny? Look on only—do nothing—and it will fall of itself. What business is it of yours to rescue from destruction a power, so inordinate in its ambition, and so hostile to the happiness of Europe."

"Such would have been the language that we should have heard, if the monarchy of France had been the object of forbearance, and if ministers had been the persons to advise us to forbear. I will not press similar interrogations in such a way as to impute to any gentleman improper and unjustifiable partialities: but I cannot help asking, whether the present government of France

be indeed one which has deserved so well of this country, which, to take the question more candidly, has deserved so well of France, which, in the still more large and liberal cant of the day, has deserved so well of *humanity*, as that we should feel ourselves called upon to take so extraordinary a step in its behalf? And I would farther ask, whether, whatever be the present degree of weakness or stability in the government of France (upon which I give no opinion), whether the effect of this motion must not be to prop its power, and to come to the aid of its unpopularity; whether, with this vote of security in one hand, the Directory might not boldly hold out the gazette of Lord Nelson's victory in the other, and call upon the people of France to balance what had been lost with what had been gained?

"But admitting, for the argument's sake, the object of the hon. gentleman's motion to be advantageous to this country; it would remain to be seen how far that object is clearly expressed or understood, and how far the means which he suggests are calculated for attaining it. The hon. gentleman takes credit to himself for not limiting or defining, in any degree, the nature or terms of the peace, which it is the duty of his majesty's ministers to conclude. If he had not mentioned this omission as a point on which he takes credit to himself, it is that which I should have been tempted to select for peculiar disapprobation. It seems to me at least a new and unusual course of policy, instead of defining the end, to contract the means of action. It would have seemed more natural and more fair, to say beforehand, "Such or such is the peace with which the country would be contented, and which would be consistent with its security and interests; but the mode of arriving at that peace, is what must be left for his majesty's ministers to devise," this surely would be fairer than to say, in the language of the present motion, "I will not tell you what peace you ought to make; but I will take from you one great instrument for making any peace at all."

"By this motion what advice do you give to ministers, or what control do you impose on them? Your advice is certainly not worth much, when you only tell them how they shall not proceed; but say nothing of how they shall proceed, or whither they shall go. Your control cannot be very effectual, since it

is they, it seems, after all, who are to remain the judges of what is "consistent with the security and interests" of Great Britain. These interests and this security must necessarily be considered with relation to the different circumstances of the enemy and of Europe. What might be a secure peace for Great Britain with France reduced in power, and Europe at liberty, would no doubt be highly unsafe against France in her present state of force and aggrandizement, with great part of Europe at her feet, and the resources of other nations at her disposal. It is equally clear, that it would be more difficult for us, single and unassisted, to extort from France such terms as would be consistent with our interests, than to obtain the same terms, if backed by a powerful confederacy in Europe. The declaration conveyed to France by this motion, that we are determined, at all events, to treat singly, would naturally inflame her pride, and increase her demands. The declaration that we make no common cause with other nations, would necessarily place those nations at her mercy, or on her side. The effect of the motion must therefore be to diminish alike the probable advantages of the peace to be obtained, and our power of obtaining it. It prescribes a more difficult end to be accomplished, with less efficacious means. At the same time, it does not tend to hasten the conclusion of even such a peace, as with such means might possibly be obtained; for it leaves ministers at liberty to conclude no peace, which they do not think "consistent with the security and interests" of the country: and if they should choose to think (which they very probably and very laudably might) that no peace would deserve this character which should not provide for the safety of Europe, what assurance does this motion give you against a hopeless prolongation of the war?

"Sir, the hon. gentleman's purpose, if I at all comprehend it, required that he should have made the latter part of his motion as distinct as the beginning. If he had done so—if he had fairly stated the idea, which he has in his own mind,—I apprehend that, instead of the circumlocution, of a peace "consistent with security and interests," &c. we should have heard of a *separate peace*. I confess, this was what I was prepared to expect. I expected it the rather, from comparing the general reasoning of the hon. gentleman with respect to *separate war*,

with what is reported to have been said upon the same topic in another place by a noble statesman of great consideration and celebrity, a statesman who, to a life of political activity, has had the advantage of adding an age of retirement and reflection. This great authority, I understand, recommended, as the only sort of war that suited the circumstances of this country, a tight, snug, little, domestic war; in which our exertions should be confined at home; in which we should not stretch an arm beyond the circumference of our own dominions, but should sit down with our navy collected about us, and turn round upon our own axis, without reference to the rest of the world. The main advantage stated as likely to result from this system was, that *our sailors would spend their wages at home:*—the noble statesman ought to have added, to heighten the glowing picture, that they would spend them *in exciseable commodities.* This system of separate war was evidently calculated to lead ultimately to separate peace: as, indeed, its illustrious promulgator avowed. I imagined that the hon. gentleman, in adopting the premises of the noble statesman, must be prepared likewise to adopt his conclusion. I should certainly disapprove of both, because I cannot but apprehend that a war so very like peace would lead to a peace that would be very like war—that a contest (if contest it might be called) in which we should be afraid to employ our forces, would lead to a pacification at which we should be afraid to disband them. And this opinion I venture to entertain, in opposition to such high authority, because I think I have on my side the eternal and immutable truth, that the objects of human desire are attainable only by human exertion; that never yet did inaction beget repose, or a want of energy and spirit secure permanent and unmolested tranquillity.

"The system of separation, however, is defended upon another ground. It is conceded with great candour, that the conduct of France is very bad; but it is at the same time contended, that the other powers of Europe are very bad too; and that the less we have to do with either of them, the better. I must take leave, sir, in the first place, to observe upon the affectation, which has grown up among those who argue against the war, of pairing-off the enormities of France against the imputed crimes of regular governments. No sooner is any fresh act of

atrocity, cruelty, perfidy, or injustice, on the part of the French republic brought forward in argument, than recourse is had to some stale trite topic of declamation, which has been used a hundred and a hundred times, against Russia, Prussia, Austria, or the old government of France. During Robespierre's reign, the favourite *pair* for every one of his noyades, and fusillades, his crowded dungeons, and sweeping executions,—was the imprisonment of La Fayette! The partition of Poland too!—(a measure which I have no thoughts of justifying) against how many detestable, impious, and tyrannical outrages, invasions, confiscations, rapines, massacres of the French government, has not the partition of Poland been cited as a parallel! It has really, sir, been called into service so often, that it ought no longer to be considered as a *pair*. It is time to agree, that at least in any future enormities of France, she shall not have a set-off in the partition of Poland.

"But after all, to what does this argument at best amount? The world is a bad world, and we are, therefore, to withdraw ourselves from it. Good:—if this were, indeed, practicable; if it remained for us to choose whether we would make a part of this world or no;

> "If Heaven would make us such another world
> Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,"——

where all should be pure, and perfect, and without a flaw. But if we are, in spite of ourselves, compelled to belong to the world in which we are placed, I know not whether it be not more manly, more statesman-like, and more virtuous, too, to make the best of it; to do what we can with the materials which we have; and to endeavour to work out our own happiness, even though we should not be able to separate and disconnect it from the happiness of our fellow-creatures.

"I think this a more rational conduct than the sort of national secession which the hon. gentleman's motion goes to recommend. I know of no justifiable reason for such a secession,—I can conceive no motive for it, consistent with true sense of right, and just dignity of character. I know not how we could reconcile it to ourselves (if it were practicable) to withdraw into gloomy solitude, and 'grim repose,' while we have talents which

God has given us for the benefit of our fellow-creatures, and while we have a station which affords us an opportunity of employing those talents to that purpose. It is not under such circumstances that I can conceive it to be excusable, to indulge a whim, and fretfulness, and peevishness of temper, from personal spleen and petty resentment, because every thing does not go exactly as we would have it. I can conceive no cause, except sullen discontent, and disappointed ambition, which could lead us to abjure communion with mankind. For discontent, as a nation, God be thanked, we have no ground! Ours has been a generous ambition, and it has not been disappointed so far as we are ourselves concerned; but it looks to larger and more elevated objects, to the peace and prosperity of the world. If, indeed, the full gratification of ambitious views were a sufficient reason for retirement, we might fairly and proudly retire, and say, with truth and confidence, that we have acted our part. If we had undertaken the war for territorial aggrandizement, if we had been impelled to it by a thirst of naval glory, we might, indeed, sit down contented with our conquests, when there is scarcely any thing left for us to acquire; we might pause, satiated with victory, when we have no longer an enemy to subdue. But we did not undertake the war for these objects. Undertake it, indeed, we did, in *no* sense: it was forced upon us by the aggression and ambition of our enemy: we were compelled to engage in it for our safety and defence, not in local, partial, and insulated points, but in those points in which our safety is connected and bound up with the safety, honour, and interests of Europe.

"But what," say the gentlemen on the other side of the house, "is the distinct *object* for which we are engaged?" Gentlemen put this question,—as if an *object* were a corporeal substance, as if it was something tangible, something that could be taken in the hand, and laid upon your table, and turned round and round before them, for accurate, ocular examination. In this sense, I profess myself perfectly unable to satisfy them. But do they mean something less precise than this (though scarcely less so), the statement of some one distinct term, the obtaining of which is to be settled before-hand as a *sine qua non* condition of peace? If they do mean this, are they really prepared to argue

that such a statement, supposing it could be made, would be politic, would be prudent, particularly with a view to the facilitating or accelerating a pacification? Do they not believe—is it not evident—that if it had any effect, it would have an effect exactly the contrary? Do they think that the resolution of 1707, for instance, to which I have already referred, had a tendency to promote, or to retard peace? That resolution, indeed, we know was not adhered to. Was it then politic to have passed it? Or, would the gentlemen be contented with the statement of an *object* to which we did not mean to adhere? Would they gain any thing by this? Would this give facility to peace, or vigour to war? Would it contribute to any possible purpose that could be in any way beneficial to the country?

"That we have objects, great and momentous objects, in our view, there is no man that must not feel. I can have no difficulty in declaring, that the most complete and desirable termination of the contest would be the deliverance of Europe. I am told, indeed, that there are persons who affect not to understand this phrase; who think there is something confused, something involved, something of studied ambiguity and concealment in it. I cannot undertake to answer for other gentlemen's powers of comprehension. The map of Europe is before them. I can only say, that I do not admire that man's intellects, and I do not envy that man's feelings, who can look over that map without gathering some notion of what is meant by the deliverance of Europe. I do not envy that man's feelings, who can behold the sufferings of Switzerland, and who derives from that sight no idea of what is meant by the deliverance of Europe. I do not envy the feelings of that man, who can look without emotion at Italy, plundered, insulted, trampled upon, exhausted, covered with ridicule, and horror, and devastation; who can look at all this, and be at a loss to guess what is meant by the deliverance of Europe. As little do I envy the feelings of that man, who can view the people of the Netherlands driven into insurrection, and struggling for their freedom against the heavy hand of a merciless tyranny, without entertaining any suspicion of what may be the sense of the word deliverance. Does such a man contemplate Holland, groaning under arbitrary oppressions and exactions? Does he turn his eyes to Spain

trembling at the nod of a foreign master? And does the word deliverance still sound unintelligibly in his ear? Has he heard of the rescue and salvation of Naples by the appearance and the triumphs of the British fleet? Does he know that the monarchy of Naples maintains its existence at the sword's point? And is his understanding, and is his heart, still impenetrable to the sense and meaning of the deliverance of Europe?

"Sir, that we shall succeed in effecting this general deliverance, I do not pretend to affirm. That in no possible case we should lay down our arms, and conclude a peace before it is fully effected, I do not mean to argue. But that this is the object which we ought to have in view, even if we look to our own safety only, —that of this we ought to accomplish as much as our means, our power, our exertions, our opportunities will allow, I do most anxiously contend. If circumstances should unhappily arise to make the attainment of the object hopeless, it will be time enough when they do arise to give up the hopes of attaining it! but do not let us run before misfortune, do not let us presume disappointment, and anticipate the necessity of disgrace!

"But it is contended, and justly contended, that the deliverance of Europe cannot be effected by our exertions alone; and that, unless other powers are sincerely disposed to co-operate, we are setting out on a romantic and absurd and impracticable enterprise, which we have neither any chance of accomplishing, nor any duty or call to undertake. I perfectly agree, that if other powers are not disposed to co-operate, we have no reasonable chance of succeeding to the extent of our wishes. But, I cannot help asking, at the same time, if there be no such disposition on the part of other powers, where is the use or what is the necessity for the hon. gentleman's motion? Why need parliament interfere to prevent his majesty's ministers from taking advantage of dispositions which do not exist, and from accepting co-operation which will not be offered? But if, on the other hand, the powers of Europe, or any of them, are ready to do their part towards the common salvation, and want but our countenance and encouragement to begin; if the train is laid, if the sparks of enmity and resentment, which the aggressions of France have kindled in every nation throughout Europe, want but our breath to blow them into conflagration;—is it the dictate of our

duty, our interest, or our feelings, to save France from destruction, and by a coarse and hasty proceeding, like that which is now recommended to us, to throw a wet blanket on the flames?

"If, however, the co-operation of allies should be offered, we are called upon to receive them with suspicion and distrust; and to be assured from the fate of former confederacies, from the manner in which we have been duped and deceived heretofore, that no fidelity to engagements, and no consistency of conduct, is to be expected from the continental powers. It seems to me that this is rather a hard, unfair, and hasty judgment. When it is contended, that because Austria and Prussia have been unfaithful to our alliance, and have made peace at different times in a manner equally inconsistent with their engagements and their interests,—Russia and the Porte must therefore be considered as equally faithless, equally worthless allies, as powers on whom no reliance can be placed, and from whose exertions no advantage can be expected;—when the errors of the guilty are thus made to furnish a ground of presumption against the innocent;—I have too much respect for the hon. gentleman to say, that he reasons falsely or feebly; but I must say, that if I had ever happened to meet with such a train of reasoning, upon any other subject, in any other place, I should have had little hesitation in condemning it as illogical and inconclusive. Of the treatment, indeed, which the Ottoman Porte receives, I think we have some reason to complain. Gentlemen seem to think that when they have quoted the words of his majesty's speech, 'the vigour and decision of the Ottoman Porte,' they have entirely settled the question; that they have stated something obviously and palpably absurd and ridiculous:—and the smile with which this quotation is received by those who surround them must very much encourage them in that idea. They seem to think, that because the grand seignior wears a long beard and a long gown, and is altogether a figure such as we are not accustomed every day to contemplate,—to expect vigour and decision, or good sense or sound policy from him, is an expectation in the highest degree wild and fantastical.

"I cannot, for my life, bring myself to understand where all this ridicule lies. I know not why the grand seignior should not take as correct a view of his interests as any other power

whose customs may be more conformable to our own. I am sure that the declaration (which we have all seen) of the motives which have guided the conduct of the Porte is as able and masterly a composition, as correct in principles of justice, and as sound in principles of policy, as any state paper that ever was published by any cabinet of Europe. And if the dress and decorations of the Turk be all that strikes the hon. gentleman as ridiculous, I know not why I should forbear to take the benefit that might result to my arguments from calling your attention to the antic mummeries and tri-coloured trumpery of the enlightened Executive Directory of France. But I know, if I were to do so, sir, I should be censured as illiberal, unphilosophical, and, there is another word in fashion which I had almost forgotten, *uncandid*. Allow me, sir, only to claim the same candour and liberality for the Turk.

"But your Turk is a Mahometan, it seems, and therefore an ally not fit for a Christian!—I do not know, sir, but an alliance with a Mahometan may be as good as a peace with an atheist; the sanction of its engagements may, perhaps, be as sacred, and its stipulations as likely to be fulfilled.

"But he is a sluggish Turk; slow to anger, and hard to be driven into action! If that be his character, what must be the provocations which have roused him?

"But then comes the worst of all:—the Turks and the Russians are naturally enemies; and yet here we find them most unnaturally allied together against a common enemy. In the first place, sir, it is a little hard, that, when in favour of France, all notions of received and established policy, and of the balance of power in Europe, are to be utterly disregarded, and put out of the question, there is yet to be no combination against France but upon principles strictly conformable to them. But, after all, what is there in this argument? What does it prove, but that the aggressions of France have been so multiplied, so various, and so extraordinary, as to unite against her powers the most opposite in nature and in interest, as to make the necessity of resistance, and the duty of self-preservation supersede every narrower consideration, every motive of more particular and contracted policy?

"Did gentlemen suppose, then, that there is such a magic force

in the hostility of France, that if she attacks, at the same time, two powers, naturally enemies to each other, the recollection of their previous hostility shall deprive each of them of the capacity of self-defence? Did any body ever see, or hear, or read of an instance of such rooted, and unconquerable, and unreasonable antipathy? Can they conceive this in individual instances? If a man comes against me with a sword stained with the blood of my enemy, am I therefore to make no resistance to his attack?

"For our *old* allies, however, it is taken for granted that no apology can be made. No good reason, it is contended, can be given, why *they* should not be more worthy of our confidence, more steady to our interests and their own, than they have proved themselves in the former confederacy. The hon. gentleman has anticipated an argument which he is apprehensive may be drawn from the change of circumstances in Europe, and from the conviction which is grown up within this last year, respecting the real views and intentions of France. This argument the hon. gentleman has anticipated, and declares he sees nothing in it. The hon. gentleman is right in his anticipation. I certainly am disposed to use this argument; and I certainly am equally disposed to differ from the hon. gentleman as to its force and validity.

"I would ask the hon. gentleman, I would ask every man in the house, whether he does not know, personally and intimately know, many individuals in this country, the whole course and current of whose ideas, with respect to France, have of late been entirely changed? Does he not believe that the invasion of Switzerland, for instance, that the profligate, swindling transaction with America, that the event of the negotiation at Lisle, worked a great change in the public mind in this country? Is not the hon. gentleman acquainted with great and illustrious converts among what some persons have deemed the most able, the most enlightened, and most respectable characters of the age? And by what rule, either of justice or of reason, does the hon. gentleman propose to limit the benefits of experience to his own countrymen alone? Is it not possible that the statesmen of Austria or of Prussia may have caught some light from what has passed upon the continent of Europe? May not Baron

Thugut or Count Haugwitz have declared (though not, perhaps, in a public tavern), at Berlin or Vienna, that 'France has thrown off the mask, if ever she wore it?' Would not they be to be believed if they had made such a declaration? Is there any thing that should make their profession incredible, and their conviction suspicious? Or is it to the enlightened wisdom, to the penetrating and perspicacious sagacity, to the firm and inflexible virtue of our own patriot statesmen alone, that we would confine the plea of credulity, and restrict the privilege of recantation?

"I, sir, do not see the justice of such a restriction and limitation: and I confess I should try the sincerity of such a recantation by one test alone; by observing whether or not it were followed by any act that corresponded with its spirit and its meaning. It has been observed by ancient philosophers, that if virtue could be brought to perfection and consummation in any human mind, the possessor of it would still be an imperfect creature, forasmuch as the consciousness of his own excellence would weaken in him one of the first and most amiable qualities of human nature—the indulgence for the frailties of his fellow-creatures. It is, I suppose, from some such cause as this, that the gentlemen on the other side of the house show themselves so little indulgent to the failings and errors of our allies. Conscious that nothing of French artifice, or French wickedness, could deceive or impose upon them, they cannot forgive the folly and stupidity of those who have suffered themselves for a moment to be so deluded: nay, they are hardly content to ascribe the delusion to folly; but are forward to insinuate a suspicion of sympathy and fellow-feeling with France.

"We, sir, who have not the same consciousness of infallibility in ourselves, are naturally averse from such suspicion, and more disposed to make good-natured allowances. And I protest, for one, that if the ministers whom I have mentioned, Baron Thugut and Count Haugwitz,—nay, if even their masters, the emperor and the king of Prussia, had pledged themselves yet deeper to a mistaken opinion of France;—if the forms of the house had admitted of their being brought to your bar, and there, sir, before God and the country, swearing upon their oaths and upon their honour, that they believed,—nay, swearing that

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they always would continue to believe, that the government of France was the gentlest, quietest, purest, noblest, faithfullest, best of governments; that it abhorred and detested above all things the idea of foreign interference with the government of other countries; that the character of the Directory had something in it of peculiar candour, ingenuity, and openness; that they (the witnesses) spoke to these facts from their own certain knowledge, for that they had lived upon terms of the most confidential intercourse with the Directory, and their communication had been almost entirely upon subjects of a political nature: If, I say, sir, such had been the testimony in favour of France, given with all the solemnity of an oath, by the great personages to whom I have referred; I should yet be willing to allow some credit to their asseveration, if they were now to come forward and tell us, that the circumstances of the conduct of France since the time when this testimony was given, that, above all, the declarations and confession of France herself, had completely changed their opinion; had detected the fraud which had been practised upon their judgment, and had convinced them of the profligacy, the atrocity, and the hypocrisy of the Directory. I say, sir, I should be willing to give full credit to this penitent retraction. I should be willing even to profit by their offers of future co-operation against France. Nor do I well see on what ground the hon. gentlemen could reject such offers, unless they are prepared to argue (which if they are, on their own judgments be the responsibility,—I do not presume to give any opinion for or against such a proposition) that 'no man who has once been contaminated by the communion of French principles,—who has been drawn, however innocently or mistakenly, into an approbation and encouragement of persons acting upon these principles, can never again be a sound man.' I, for my part, should in such a case incline to believe the recantation sincere, and to act upon it as such, unless, indeed, at the moment of making it, the same person were to say to me, 'I do not, however, so much disapprove French principles in themselves: I only doubt the propriety of their application.' Then, indeed, I admit, that I should distrust him again as much as ever.

"So much, sir, as to the particular argument that the past conduct of our former allies ought to lead us to withhold all credit

from their future professions. There is, however, another and a more general argument, comprehending alike these and the other powers of Europe; which, but that it has been stated by the hon. gentleman, I should really have thought scarcely worth confutation. *We*, it seems—a wise, prudent, reflecting people—are much struck with all the outrages that France has committed upon the continent; but on the powers of the continent itself no lasting impression has been made. Is this probable? Is it possible? Is it in the nature of things, that the contemplation of the wrongs and miseries which others have endured, should have worked a deeper impression upon our minds, than the suffering of those miseries and wrongs has left on the minds of those upon whom they were actually inflicted?

'Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus.'

Yet the echo and report of the blows by which other countries have fallen, are supposed to have had more effect upon us, than the blows themselves produced upon the miserable victims who sunk beneath them.

"The pillage and bloody devastation of Italy strike *us* with horror: but Italy, we are to believe, is contented with what has befallen her. The insults which are hurled by the French garrison from the walls of the citadel of Turin rouse resentment in *our* breasts, but have no effect on the feelings of the Piedmontese. *We* read with indignation of the flag of Bernadotte displayed in mockery and insult to the emperor and his subjects; but it flaunted in the eyes of the people of Vienna without exciting any emotions of hatred or resentment. The invasion of a province of a friendly power with whom they had no cause nor pretext for hostility, has created in *us* a decided detestation for the unprincipled hypocrisy and ambition of the Directory; but the Ottoman Porte sits down contented with the loss of Egypt, feels no injury, and desires neither reparation nor revenge.

"And then, sir, the wrongs of Switzerland! They, too, are calculated to excite an interest *here*; but the Swiss no doubt endure them with quiet resignation, and contented humility. If, after the taking of Soleure, the venerable magistrates of that

place were first paraded round the town in barbarous triumph, and afterwards, contrary to all the laws of war, of nations, and of nature, were inhumanly put to death; if, when the unoffending town of Sion capitulated to the French, the troops were let loose to revel in every species of licentiousness and cruelty,—if the women, after having been brutally violated, were thrown alive into the flames; if, more recently, when Stantz was carried after a short but vigorous and honourable resistance, such as would have conciliated the esteem of any but a French conqueror, the whole town was burnt to the ground, and the ashes quenched with the blood of the inhabitants: the bare recital of these horrors and atrocities awakens in British bosoms, I trust it *does* awaken, I trust it will long keep alive, an abhorrence of the nation and name of that people by whom such execrable cruelties have been practised, and such terrible calamities inflicted: but on the Swiss (we are to understand) these cruelties and calamities have left no lasting impression; the inhabitants of Soleure, who followed with tears of anguish and indignation their venerated magistrates to a death of terror and ignominy; the husbands and fathers and sons of those wretched victims who expired in torture and in shame beneath the brutality of a savage soldiery at Sion: the wretched survivors of those who perished in the ruins of their country at Stantz; *they* all felt but a transient pang; *their* tears by this time are dried; *their* rage is hushed; *their* resentment silenced: there is nothing in *their* feelings which can be stimulated into honourable and effectual action; there is no motive for *their* exertions, upon which we can safely and permanently rely! Sir, I should be ashamed to waste your time by arguing such a question.

"If, however, with such allies as there is a probability of obtaining, with such a chance for the fidelity and stability of those alliances, as the circumstances to which I have alluded appear to furnish, we are yet to be told that there is no safety in such a system: it may be worth while to consider very shortly, whether a greater degree of security would belong to a separate treaty of peace with France concluded at the present moment, if at the present moment it were possible to conclude it. I certainly have no thoughts of troubling you at length upon this part of the subject, because there is not one word in the hon

gentleman's speech which implies the belief (it would indeed be strange if he could believe) that any peace on any terms is at present within our power. But if the faith of other powers be doubtful, the perfidy of France is certain.

"Need I enumerate the several instances of direct and profligate breach of faith, which have distinguished, or rather which have marked in almost equal degree, every diplomatic act of the French republic? Need I recal to your memory how the preliminaries of Leoben (first granted to the emperor to extricate Buonaparte from the difficulties of the situation into which his rashness had precipitated him) were withdrawn and cancelled by the French government, under the pretence that to claim the execution of them was to impose on the generosity of the republic? how in their room was substituted the treaty of Campo Formio? and how the treaty of Campo Formio, after being violated in innumerable instances, has been almost distinctly abrogated and renounced in the confederacies at Radstadt? Need I desire you to recollect the fraud and violence by which the French took possession of Venice, and the shameless injustice with which they the next day transferred that possession to the emperor? Need I return again to Switzerland to remind you, that the invasion of that devoted country was the work not of arms so much as of treaty; that the way for pillage and devastation was opened by the pretext of superintending and guaranteeing a few *parliamentary reforms?* Can we remember these things, and yet pretend to doubt if we shall have as good security for the fidelity of our allies in the prosecution of the contest, as we could build on the faith of France for its safe and honourable termination?

"There is yet another point of view in which this argument may be considered. Let us compare the expectations which we may be allowed to form of our allies with the character and situation of the several allies of France. If we, in renewing the great confederacy of the powers of the continent, are weaving a rope of sand; let us examine whether the connexions of France are bound to her by a chain which nothing can loosen. If the ground upon which we stand is false and hollow, let us see whether the alliances of France rest upon a more stable and solid foundation. If the only sure foundation of permanent

alliance between nations must be laid in community of interest and of sentiment, in the sense of mutual benefits, or in the interchange of protection on the one side, and attachment on the other; let us look round, sir, among the states which are immediately connected with France; let us examine the benefits which they derive from her friendship, and it will not be difficult to estimate the affection, which they must owe to her in return. Is it in the Cisalpine, the Roman, the Ligurian republics, those deformed and rickety children, upon whom the mother republic has lavished so much of her care,—is it in these, however they may bear the precious resemblance of their parent, that we are to look for the fondness of filial duty and attachment? Are we to look for it in the Cisalpine republic, whom, in preference to the others, she appears to have selected as a living subject for her experiments in political anatomy; whom she has delivered up tied and bound to a series of butchering, bungling, philosophical professors, to distort, and mangle, and lop, and stretch its limbs into all sorts of fantastical shapes, and to hunt through its palpitating frame the vital principle of republicanism? Is the infant Roman republic so gratified by the present which France has made to it of five consuls instead of two, as to forget all the miseries, the robbery, the confiscation, and the blood, by which this invaluable acquisition has been purchased? Does the protection, which she has afforded to the Ligurian republic, entitle her to their affectionate acknowledgment and pious devotion? Observe, I beg of you, in what a situation those unfortunate Ligurians have been placed by her. They are forced into acts of outrage and hostility against England. We declare war against them;—and such is their confidence in the protection of France, that no sooner has that war been declared, than they come crawling upon their knees to implore our pity and forbearance! Unnatural Ligurians! if they are not thankful for such an instance of the parental solicitude of France for their welfare!

"Look next at that unfortunate prince whose dominions border upon these wretched republics, and ask, by what ties of gratitude is the king of Sardinia bound to his ally! The king of Sardinia, it is true, has not yet been precipitated from his throne: but he sits there with the sword of a French garrison suspended

above his head. He retains, indeed, the style and title of king; but there is a French general to be 'viceroy over him.' A prisoner in his own capital, surrounded by the spies and agents, and hemmed in by the arms of the Directory, compelled to dismiss from his councils and his presence all those of his servants who were most attached to his person and most zealous for his interests; compelled to preach daily to his people the mortifying and degrading lesson of that patience and humility of which he is himself a melancholy example, to excuse and extenuate the insults offered by his allies to his subjects, to repress, even by force, the resentment of his subjects against his allies: is this a situation in which the king of Sardinia can be supposed to derive comfort from the alliance of France, and repay it with thankfulness? Would he not, even if this were to be the extent of his suffering and degradation; would he not, if he inherits the spirit of his great ancestors, if their blood flows in his veins; would he not seize, even at the risk of his crown and of his life, any opportunity that might be afforded him, to emancipate himself from a connexion so burthensome, to shake of the weight of a friendship so intolerable?

"But he well knows that he has not yet suffered all that is prepared for him. He knows full well that he is allowed to occupy even this shadowy and tottering throne, to grasp the "unreal mockery" of a sceptre, only so long as he shall be necessary as purveyor for the French army in Italy, or until it shall please the capricious cruelty of his tyrants to end his disgrace by annihilation. Perhaps the supplies for a campaign may be more readily procured by the operations of a regular government than they could be by any new upstart revolutionary power, in a country agitated by the ferment of political change. Perhaps the lust of destroying may overbear this prudential consideration. But, at all events, the war in Italy once over, whether it be in the tide of victory, or in the ebb and reflux of defeat, that the French armies return through Piedmont, their passage will alike be fatal to this unhappy monarch and to his people; they will equally sweep away with them, in a torrent, whatever remains of royalty and of established government; and will leave behind them the same wreck, the same

shapeless ruins, with which the fair face of the neighbouring countries is already encumbered and deformed.

"But, perhaps, with more powerful and more respected allies, with those whose names were brought forward with such display and ostentation in the negociation at Lisle, as inseparably connected with the honour and interests of the French republic: perhaps with Holland and with Spain a greater degree of forbearance has been observed; a more friendly and liberal intercourse has been established; a more honourable and independent system of communication has been maintained.

"The friendship of Holland! The independence of Spain! Is there a man so besotted as to suppose, that there is one hour of peace with France preserved by either of these unhappy countries, that there is one syllable of friendship uttered by them towards France, but what is extorted by the immediate pressure, or by the dread and terror, of French arms?

———'mouth-honour, breath
Which the poor heart would fain refuse, but dare not!'

Have the regenerated republic of Holland, or the degraded monarchy of Spain, such reason to rejoice in the protection of the French republic, that they would voluntarily throw themselves between her and any blow which might menace her existence? Holland once had wealth, had industry, had commerce. Where are they now? Gone; swallowed up in the all-devouring gulf of French bankruptcy. Holland once had flourishing colonies; them, perhaps, France has preserved for her. The flag of the enemies of France is flying in Ceylon, and at the Cape of Good Hope. Holland had once a navy, a navy of strength and gallantry and reputation, a navy which has often contended even with our own, and contended with no mean exertion, for the mastery of the sea? Where is it now? Where is the skill which directed, the promptness, courage, and vigour, which manned it? All utterly destroyed and gone. The baneful touch of French fraternity has blasted the reputation, has unmanned the strength, has bowed the spirit of the people, in the same proportion as it has exhausted the resources of the country. The spirit of the people is bowed, it is true; but let us

trust that it is not broken; let us hope that, if an opening should be presented, it may yet spring up with sudden and irresistible violence, to the astonishment and overthrow of its oppressors.

"Spain, however, it may be said, is still powerful, and still a monarchy; to Spain, therefore, the friendship of France must have been offered on more equal and durable terms. An alliance with a Bourbon cemented with Bourbon blood cannot but be lasting. I look at Spain, sir, and it must be owned I find her still a monarchy; she has not yet received the blessings of a Directory and two consuls. But I confess I perceive no one of those features by which the monarchy of Spain has heretofore been distinguished. I see nothing of power; I can discover nothing of policy. I know, that to be engaged in an impolitic war is not of itself an unheard-of or an unaccountable novelty. Spain has, no doubt, been often engaged, as well as other powers, in wars of pride, in wars of ambition, in wars of doubtful or mistaken interest. In an absolute monarchy too, like Spain, it must often have happened, that, in matters of war, or alliance, as well as of internal regulation and domestic policy, the will of the prince, guided either by shallow favouritism, or by crooked intrigue, has at times adopted measures prejudicial to the welfare of his subjects. A powerful and haughty nobility, a numerous and highly-privileged clergy, may at other times have given an impulse to the direction of affairs agreeable only to their own prejudices and partial interests. At other times, again, the tempest of popular fury has overborne both the will of the prince and the power of the aristocracy, and driven the machine of government wholly out of its natural course and direction. But a situation of things, in which the crown is enthralled, the aristocracy humbled, and the nation in general degraded and impoverished, not by the effects of internal struggle, or the perverse preponderance of any one party or member of the state, but by the palpable, undisguised, and oppressive agency of a foreign power: this is, indeed, an unusual situation for an independent kingdom. Such is, however, the situation of Spain. The power of the monarch, the prejudices and privileges of the higher orders, the comfort, happiness, and almost subsistence of the mass of the people, are all embarked

together in a war of which the success or failure must be equally fatal to them all: a war which has committed that country with an enemy whom it dares not face, and has linked it to the fortunes, and subjected it to the will, of an ally whose friendship is more formidable than hostility: a war which has brought into contempt the authority of the government and the character of the nation; which has exhausted the commercial and annihilated their military marine; which, in precluding their intercourse with their colonies, has cut off the springs of wealth that fed the state, and the streams of commerce that enriched the country; a war which has done more in two short years, under the auspices of France, to carry into execution that vote of the British parliament in 1707, to wrest the monarchy of Spain and the Spanish West Indies from the possession of the house of Bourbon, than all the exertions of this country could ever have effected, than all its enmity could ever have desired.

"So fatal has been to Spain already the friendship of the French republic; and such are the obligations by which she is bound to it in perpetual allegiance and fidelity! But this is not yet all: the King of Spain has yet to drink the bitter dregs of misery and degradation.

"Sir, when Louis XIV. broke up the conferences of Gertruydenberg rather than submit to the proposal of turning his arms against his grandson; whatever our dislike of his former insolence, or our detestation of his ambition may be, we cannot refuse our approbation to this just display of spirit and of feeling. Fallen as he then was from the splendor of his high fortunes, and in some measure at the mercy of his enemies; we cannot but applaud the honourable pride with which, while conceding territory and dominion as the price of peace, he yet rejected peace itself, when it was to be purchased with ignominy. I think, too, we cannot but condemn the cruel and ungenerous policy which dictated the demand of such a sacrifice. But this, we are to recollect, was the demand of a triumphant enemy. Mark now the extortion of a protecting friend! The King of Spain, exhausted in his resources, and disgraced in his arms, by a war carried on at the instigation, and for the exclusive interest, of the French Directory, is, in return for these exertions, commanded by that Directory to employ what remains of the

strength and power of his kingdom, for the conquest of Portugal, for the subversion of the throne to which his daughter is heir. Have we the feelings of men, and do we doubt what sentiments of indignation and disgust this outrageous command must have excited in the bosom of a father and a king?

"Now, sir, there is a story, and it was a good one till the French got hold of it—the story of *William Tell*. I think I need hardly make the application. Would it appear to us a surprising or an unnatural thing, if the King of Spain, urged and finally compelled to point his last weapon at the crown of his daughter, should turn round, in the fury of despair, and aim it at the bosom of the tyrant who dictated the blow?

"I have not troubled the house with this enumeration, as conceiving it to hold out in itself inducements and temptations for the continuance of the war, supposing that we had any choice as to continuing or concluding it. But forced as we are to persevere in the contest, and expedient as it appears that we should furnish ourselves with whatever means we can procure for conducting it to a termination consistent with our safety and our honour, and convinced, as I think every man must be, that the co-operation of other powers affords at least one great instrument for such an exertion: it does, I think, seem material, when against the system of alliances no argument is so loudly urged as the probability of those alliances proving unfaithful and unsound; it does, I think, seem material to ascertain, whether this hazard is peculiar to our situation alone; or whether, if on the one hand we have but feeble assistance, we are likely, on the other hand, to have any thing but feebleness to oppose. Committed with our enemy single-handed, France to England, what should we fear? But if the accession of allies is to us an accession of weakness, is it not something to be assured that to France it is not an accession of permanent and formidable strength? that if France has the means of seducing our allies, we have the satisfaction of feeling that our interest cannot be indifferent to the allies of France? that even when men called on her side, and fighting under her banners, they cannot fail in their secret hearts to pray that the victory may be on our side?

"Is not this the case? Do we not know it to be so? Who

is there that has not heard; and heard with heartfelt delight, that the glorious victory of the first of August communicated a sensation of triumph and of joy, not only to the heart of England; not only to the bosoms of those nations whose deliverance is more immediately effected; not only to nations neutral in name, but who feel in spite of their neutrality that their independent existence is involved in the issue of the contest; but even to nations nominally hostile to Great Britain, to governments the slaves of the power or creatures of the caprice of France? The presence of a French ambassador could scarce repress the burst of exultation in courts that trembled at his frown. The whispered satisfaction went round in circles, where an open manifestation of joy would have been treason. And even the vassal republics leaped in their chains.

"Oh! but however willing the allies of France might be to seize a favourable opportunity for shaking off the yoke of her protection, were we even able to rally them on our side in the outset of the contest, their assistance would be nothing worth. Exhausted and dispirited as they are, they have neither the heart nor strength to fight the battle of independence! True, sir, they have been cruelly reduced and broken down. It is true, that many of them have been moulded and distorted into shapes so strange and unnatural, that they scarce have limbs to use, or the power of self-motion remaining; but yet, even so, they are not wholly without vigour and vitality,—

'Spoliatis arma supersunt.'

The arms which they have remaining are the arms most terrible to tyrants; their wrongs, their desperation, the desire of revenge. Let France appeal to the bad passions of *our allies*; let her cajole their fears, or inflame their appetite for aggrandizement. The foundations of *our* tacit but intimate alliance with the *allies of France* are already laid in their just resentment, in their proud indignation, in every virtuous and every honourable feeling. When did such a conquest terminate in giving ultimate and permanent preponderance to evil? If I do not venture to anticipate a fortunate result amounting to the full completion of our sanguine and justifiable expectations, I may surely ask, what

has France done to deserve that the ordinary course of human events should be reversed in her favour?

"But then, sir, another and a graver doubt is stated. It is doubted whether, with half the world in arms on our side, the objects which we might hope to obtain would be, in any just and politic sense, *British objects*. I, sir, have not sat long enough in this house to remember the time, but a time I am told there was, when if I had ventured to hesitate a doubt whether or not the situation of the powers of the continent, relatively to us or to each other, and the general balance of Europe (as it is called), were objects of British concern, I should have been scouted and laughed at as a driveller and an idiot, or reviled as a presumptuous arraigner of the wisdom and policy of our ancestors. I understand that all this is now changed. I understand that the great authorities, from whom I should more particularly have expected such a censure if I had ventured such an opinion, have entirely thrown away and abandoned their favourite system; and are now more strenuous in decrying those who maintain it, than they were before in propagating it themselves. I cannot account for these eccentricities; but I do not presume to blame them. They at least teach me to proceed with caution; and rather to inquire with great humility from the hon. gentleman on the other side of the house, whether or no such and such things *are* objects of interest to our country, than to state any affirmative opinion of my own upon the subject.

"The hon. gentleman mentioned the East Indies, and alluded to the expedition to Egypt as having threatened our possessions in that quarter. Is then the deliverance of Egypt from a French army a *British object*? Does the hon. gentleman, or does any man, believe, that if peace had been concluded at Lisle, this expedition would at all the less have been undertaken? Does he believe that, in that case, to defeat the expedition would have been equally a *British object*? And does he think that, after the peace made at Lisle, we should have been equally in a condition to defeat it? Would not the co-operation of the Turk have been then desirable, to enable us to effect this purpose? Is it less desirable now? If, by his co-operation, we are enabled to confound and expel that horde of robbers and buccaneers,

who have taken possession of his Egyptian territory, or (what I should like much better) to shut them up on all sides, and leave them there to be quietly and gradually exterminated—is *this* no advantage to Great Britain? Was the purpose of the hon. gentleman's motion to preclude the possibility of *this* event? If, by the joint assistance of Russia and the Porte, we could sweep the Levant and the Mediterranean of the scattered remnants of this piratical armament; if the coasts of Italy were thus rendered unassailable by the enemy, and the southern coasts of France thus laid open to our attack, and the ports and commerce of the Mediterranean and Levant secured to us; are *these British objects*? Are the Netherlands a *British object*? I have heard that the dependence of the Netherlands on France has in former times been considered as so prejudicial to this country, that there was no case in which that object alone would have been a sufficient cause for prolonging or for even engaging in a war. I do not assert that this is so. But if there be any truth in this opinion, and if, by a vigorous co-operation on the part of Austria or Prussia, or both, we might have a chance of wresting this possession from France,—will the hon. gentleman, will any other man in the house be the person to get up and say, 'This you might effect, but I will prevent you?' If, by the help of Prussia, we might hope to rescue Holland from her present state of servitude and degradation, to raise her head once more among the independent powers of Europe, a rich, a flourishing and a happy country, connected with us by old habits, common interest, and the reciprocation of commercial advantages; will any man say that this would not be a *British object*? will any man lay in his claim now, would any man be proud hereafter to have entitled himself, to the credit of having thrown an insuperable impediment in the way of the rescue and restoration of Holland?

"And yet, sir, Holland has heretofore been thought to be so intimately interesting to this country, especially by gentlemen who used to sit on that side of the house, and to whose former opinions on foreign politics I have been accustomed to attach no small degree of respect and consideration, that, if I am rightly informed (for it is much beyond my memory in parliament), the only act of my right hon. friend's administration which has

had the good fortune to receive the approbation and applause of those gentlemen, and upon which they lavished as large and unqualified praise as his warmest supporters could have afforded him, was a spirited and judicious exertion, by which, in the year 1787, the designs of France in Holland were defeated (at the risk of a war), and the ascendancy of this country secured.

"I cannot believe that, if we were now debating, if it possibly could be fit matter for this house to debate, 'whether or no, having an opportunity to conclude a peace in all other respects desirable, we should continue the war for the single purpose of the deliverance of Holland alone,' I cannot believe that those persons to whom I have referred, holding the principles which they have heretofore professed, could hesitate to give their vote in the affirmative. If I am wrong in this supposition, I desire only to be informed, where, and when, and how, the change in the policy of the country took place? Is the ambition of France less formidable now? Is her desire of aggrandizement less notorious? Is her power less terrible? Is her hostility to this country less acrimonious? than when, in the year 1786, the commercial treaty with France was arraigned, by the same persons whose maxims of foreign policy I have already quoted, not as unfavourable to Great Britain, but as likely to take off the edge of our national antipathy against France? When my right hon. friend was attacked and reviled for having, in a paltry search after mercantile profit, wholly abandoned the doctrines of our ancestors, and improvidently thrown away the safety of posterity, by admitting the possibility of any relations between this country and France, except those of jealous rivalry or open contest; for having attempted to lull England into the belief that the ambition of France, because not active at the moment, was extinguished; that her power, because not exerted, had ceased to be formidable; that her professions of friendship could mean any thing, but to gain time and strength; that her apparent pacific disposition could be any thing but a drawing of breath against the renewal of hostilities?

"If all this is changed, allow me to inquire of those who can instruct me, by what process the change has been wrought? and at what period? What is its origin and date? Did it come in with the new style? Was it on *primidi*, *duodi*, or *decadi*,

in what month, and in what year, of the new republican calendar? Did the old system expire in September, and the new one begin with *Fructidor?* I really ask for information. I do not mean to question the propriety of the alteration, but to get at the reason of it. I am not too old to learn. But I cannot take it upon authority alone; and that, too, an authority which has always hitherto been on the other side. I must continue to repeat my old catechism, until I am sufficiently illuminated to understand the articles of the new.

"Till then, I must continue to ask, with some degree of earnestness, if any one of the objects, which I have enumerated, may possibly be obtained by an alliance with the powers of the continent, much more if we could be sanguine enough to suppose that such an opening might arise, as would lead to the attainment of them all, as would lead to the reduction of France within her ancient limits, and to the replacing Europe nearly in the situation in which it stood before the commencement of the war; whether or no it is possible for a member of the British parliament to entertain so extraordinary and perverse an ambition as to be desirous of having it to say hereafter, 'All this might perhaps have been accomplished, but by a single motion I prevented it all?'

"Understand me, sir, however, that I do not mean to undertake that if the hon. gentleman's motion should not pass, all this will therefore be accomplished. We are debating now, not whether or no such and such exertions will lead to such and such results; but whether or no we shall gratuitously throw away the only chance which we have for the exertions being made. The hon. gentleman does not affirm, that Europe cannot be saved; he only desires that we may have no share, that we may give no encouragement for saving it. In answer to such a proposition, it is not necessary for me to argue (what is not denied) that the success of the experiment is probable: it is only necessary for me to ask, whether its success is so improbable, and its nature so uninteresting, that you will determine beforehand that it ought not to be tried?

"The hon. gentleman, however, for his part declares, that he 'washes his hands of the whole business.' The hon. gentleman has a habit, sir, (which I do not mention to disapprove it)

of appealing to the testimony of his conscience, and of holding out to his opponents the miseries which must accrue from 'pillows stuffed with thorns.' Has the hon. gentleman ever considered the present situation of Switzerland in this point of view? And is he so eager to 'wash his hands' of any share in her possible emancipation? Is it necessary as a balm to his conscience? Will it strew his pillow with roses, to be able to say to himself: 'If the people of Switzerland succeed in breaking the galling fetters of an intolerable and bloody tyranny, thank God, I have given no aid to their efforts. I can lay my hand upon my heart and declare, that for aught I would have done for them, or would have encouraged them to do for themselves, the Swiss should have continued to groan in bitterness of sorrow, in abasement and despair. Fight your own battles, miserable Swiss!—England has no sympathy with your sufferings!—Bind tighter their fetters, sanguinary Directory—You have nothing to dread from English interference!

'Bleed, bleed, poor country!
Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dares not check thee!'

"Such, sir, is the language of the hon. gentleman's motion. But such, I trust, is not the sense of those who have heard it. I too will appeal to the conscientious feelings of individuals. I might appeal to their recorded professions in the almost unanimous vote upon the address to his majesty at the beginning of the session; but I confess when I can reach the heart and spirit, I prefer a direct appeal to them, to any argument that rests on mere formal ties or technical obligations. I might remind every gentleman who hears me, that he has concurred in an address to the throne, expressing his hearty hope that the opening afforded by the glorious successes of his majesty's arms may lead to 'the general deliverance of Europe;' and pledging himself, in no equivocal manner, to assist with his voice and counsel in the prosecution of this important object. I might require them to reconcile, if they can, the pledge there taken with a motion which contradicts both its letter and its meaning. But I prefer going home with every man to his own bosom, and

desiring him to remember, what were his first individual impressions upon receiving the account of Lord Nelson's stupendous achievement? What was the language of every society in which he happened to be conversant? The first sentiment undoubtedly was that of thanks and praise to the heroes who had thus exalted the name, the power, and the glory, of their country, and of humble gratitude to that Providence which had so signally prospered their exertions. But next—what occurred to every man's feelings and understanding? what was the question which immediately succeeded to the first burst of wonder, the first transport of thankfulness, the first emotions of rapture and delight? I see I am anticipated, 'What effect will this have upon the powers of the continent?' This was the question asked and echoed by a thousand tongues. What then was the meaning of this question? Was it the offspring of cold speculation? of idle curiosity? No. It sprung from the instantaneous, and almost instinctive, conviction, that, in spite of all the sophisticated argument that may be urged to dissuade us from a generous sympathy with the fates and fortunes of other nations, we *have* an interest in the liberties of the continent; that *our* assurance is doubly sure when those around us are preserved from destruction; that *we* can be but precariously safe, so long as there is no safety for *the rest of Europe*.

"Depend upon it, sir, in all questions which partake equally of reason and of feeling, the first impressions of a good heart and sound mind are rarely to be distrusted. They may be sanguine; they may be romantic; they may represent the object desired, as much nearer, than in the practical pursuit it turns out to be; but, as to the object itself, they are seldom misdirected. And I believe that any man of honest and liberal feelings, who ran recollect what were his first impressions upon any subject, in the consideration of which the heart as well as the understanding was engaged, will find that, in consulting those impressions, he has not been led astray. How stands the case in the present instance? Have we any reason to repent or to be ashamed of the wishes that sprung up in our bosoms upon this occasion? Was the impulse too generous, and must it be restrained? Was the benevolence too large, and must it be contracted? What new circumstances have arisen to vary our

original view of the subject? Has England become less powerful to interfere? Has the slavery of the continent been lightened? or the tyranny of France softened or subdued? Or has some disposition for peace been manifested by the enemy? such as throws difficulty in the way of any hostile and offensive operations against them; and requires that we should rest on our arms until their intentions shall be more clearly explained? I have heard of nothing of this sort—has the hon. gentleman? He has mentioned nothing of it. He has not pretended that *France* is willing to negociate. He has not advised that *we* should propose a negociation. He has indeed given it as his opinion that peace is desirable; and he has drawn some arguments to this effect from Ireland, from the East Indies, and from St. Domingo. I shall not follow him into these arguments; both because I think that they may all of them, with much greater propriety, be reserved for separate discussion in their due time; and because, unless this motion were to be understood distinctly as a motion for peace, I do not see how they can be made to bear upon the present discussion.

"But does the hon. gentleman intend his motion as a motion for peace? Then indeed I should have a worse opinion of it than I had before. For is this the way to go about such a business, with any prospect, or with any serious appearance of a desire, of success? If the hon. gentleman really thinks this a moment for opening a negociation—why has he not the candour and manliness to say so? Let him bring the matter distinctly to a question; and let us argue it. I have no hesitation in saying that it is my decided opinion that this is not the moment. But my opinion is more decided still, that, if this were the moment, the hon. gentleman has chosen the very worst possible way for availing ourselves of the opening.

"Is it dignity, and etiquette, and national honour, that stand in the way of a more direct attempt at negociation? Is it necessary in the hon. gentleman's judgment that France should make the first overtures? I confess, sir, I have no such delicacy; and if the moment seemed to me proper for any overtures at all, I should not raise much squabble about who should offer, or who should receive them. But if the hon. gentleman has this delicacy, mark, I entreat you, how delicately he manages it.

He will not speak to France, but he would speak at her. He will not propose—not he—that we should say to the Directory, 'Will you make peace?' No, sir, we are merely to say to ourselves, loud enough for the Directory to overhear us, 'I wish these French gentlemen would make an overture to us.' Now, sir, does this save the dignity of the country? or is it only a sneaking, shabby way of doing what, if fit to be done at all, must, to have any serious effect, be done openly, unequivocally, and directly? But I beg the hon. gentleman's pardon; I misrepresent him; I certainly do. His motion does not amount even to so much as I have stated. He begins farther off. The soliloquy which he prompts us by his motion is no more than this—'We must continue to make war against France, to be sure—and we are sorry for it, but we will not do it as if we bore malice. We will not make an ill-natured, hostile kind of war any longer—that we won't. And who knows but, if they should happen to overhear this resolution, as the Directory are good-natured at bottom, their hearts may soften and grow kind towards us—and then they will offer to make a peace!' And thus, sir, and thus only, is the motion a motion for peace.

"But the hon. gentleman reproaches his majesty's ministers that they have lost all their pacific dispositions; that they are become inveterately and incurably warlike; that the spirit of moderation, which he so much commended in the manifesto of last year, is evaporated; and that however they may have stood out against Lord Duncan's victory, that of Lord Nelson has intoxicated and inflamed them to madness.

"That the confidence of the country is indeed high, I am happy to acknowledge; and that the government partakes the spirit of the people, I am equally willing to believe. But that this spirit has started suddenly out of the late victory, and is exclusively to be attributed to it, I cannot agree. It was confirmed, indeed, by that victory, a victory which would have created a spirit if it had not found one. But that the spirit existed before the event of the first of August, is no degradation to the glory of that day, and is a proud accession of dignity to the character of the country. It adds new lustre to the character of the country, it places in a more conspicuous light the talents and reputation of Lord Nelson, that before we were in

possession of the confidence which grew out of his victory, we had the confidence to presume it.

Let us recollect only the days and months of anxiety which we passed, before the intelligence of that memorable event had reached us. It was an anxiety, not of apprehension, but of impatience. Our prayers were put up, not for success, but for an opportunity of deserving it: we asked, not that Nelson might conquer Buonaparte, but that Buonaparte might not have the triumph of deceiving and escaping him; not that we might gain the battle, but that we might find the enemy: for the rest we had nothing to fear——

'Concurrant pariter cum ratibus rates;
Spectent Numina Ponti, et
Palmam, qui meruit, ferat!'

Standing then, in our present proud and exalted situation, fortified by that confidence which has its foundation in the good sense, the spirit, the unexampled prosperity of the nation, and which, by the blessing of Providence, the signal and glorious successes of our arms have established and confirmed, what is the best advantage that can be made of such a situation? 'Hoard up your safety for your own use,' says the motion of the hon. gentleman. 'Lend a portion of it to other nations, that it may be returned to you tenfold, in the preservation and security of the world,' is the dictate of a larger, and, I think, a sounder policy.

But the nations of the continent, the hon. gentleman will tell us, stood by, while we were engaged in a struggle in which our very existence was at stake, without offering any assistance, or manifesting any interest in our preservation: undoubtedly, so they did; and, undoubtedly, as the hon. gentleman insinuates, our revenge is now in our power. We may tell those, who abandoned us at that moment of peril, that it is now our turn to take breath, while they are contending; that to us is now the respite, and to them the toil: that as they left us contentedly to our fate, we consign them unpityingly to theirs. We may do this in strict retaliation; but I think a British house of commons will feel that we have a nobler vengeance in our power.

We have it in our power to say to the nations of Europe: 'You deserted us at our utmost need; but the first use that we make of our prosperity is, to invite you to partake of it. We disdained to call you in, reluctant as you appeared, to share our danger; but, we are now, by our own exertions, secure: come now, and take shelter under our security.'

"Sir, they were wise words that were spoken by a great statesman and orator of ancient times, under circumstances not wholly unlike the present circumstances of the world. 'If by any super-human testimony, for to such a paradox no testimony merely human could possibly obtain belief, if by an angel from heaven I were to be assured, that the farther the enemy pushed his conquests over other countries, the more territory he acquired—the more governments he subverted—the more nations he subdued, by so much the more quiet, the more harmless, the more friendly neighbour he would be to this country: I protest that I would not, even with this view, and under these conditions, consent to give my vote for the slavery of Europe. But if there be no man upon earth, who will venture to assert so monstrous a proposition; if the very reverse of all this be demonstrably true; if every step that the enemy takes upon the continent is a step to the accomplishment of our destruction; if every city that he ransacks, every district that he acquires, is a fund of wealth and a levy of soldiers, to be employed hereafter in an exterminating war against us: then, in God's name, to what do we look? or wherefore are we hesitating?'

"Since, then, sir, this motion appears to me to be founded on no principle of policy or necessity; since, if it be intended for a censure on ministers, it is unjust; if for a control, it is nugatory; as its tendency is to impair the power of prosecuting war with vigour, and to diminish the chance of negociating peace with dignity, or concluding it with safety; as it contradicts without reason, and without advantage, the established policy of our ancestors; as it must degrade in the eyes of the world the character of this country; as it must carry dismay and terror throughout Europe; and, above all, as it must administer consolation, and hope, and power, and confidence to France; I shall give it my most hearty and decided negative."—*Mr. Tierney's Motion respecting Peace with the French Republic, Dec.* 11, 1798.

In the debate on the habeas corpus suspension act, which Mr. Courtenay had somewhat rashly brought on, with a view rather to harass the minister than to relieve the country, Mr. Canning, having refuted all his assertions as to the suffering and complaints of the incarcerated victims, closed his remarks with a cutting sentence, which was long remembered and quoted at the expense of the honourable mover. Mr. Canning sat down with advising Mr. Courtenay for the future, "to keep his humanity for Smith and Binns, his religion for Newgate, and his jokes for the hackney coachmen."

In the following session, 1799, Mr. Canning took a prominent part in the debate on the king's message relative to a union with Ireland. This was a favourite measure with Mr. Pitt, and subsequently carried—with what honour and integrity on the part of the right honourable Premier, history will fearlessly declare. That the measure itself was one of sound policy, had good faith been kept with the other contracting party; and that it would have consolidated the power of the two countries, and ministered most effectually to the prosperity of Ireland, few will venture to doubt. With the direction and management of the affair, or with the motives, promises, and mental reservations of the Premier, Mr. Canning had nothing to do, and for these he cannot in any fairness be rendered responsible. He argues the question on broad and general principles, and arrives at the conclusion to which such principles naturally conducted him. Mr. Canning's speech on this occasion is a masterly reply to that of Mr. Sheridan, who strongly reprobated both the justice and policy of the proposed union. Without

inserting here those parts of Mr. Canning's splendid effort which possessed a mere temporary interest, we shall content ourselves with introducing the general argument.

"And now, sir, with regard to the posture of affairs in Ireland, into an examination of which, though I am not at present disposed minutely to enter, I must nevertheless place it in a very different point of view from that in which it has been pictured by my hon. friend. Has my hon. friend inquired into the state of Ireland since late events have taken place; events which are now notorious, and cannot possibly be disputed? Is it not notorious that a rebellion has existed, and that it is now checked, though, perhaps, not effectually quelled? Is it not notorious that the object of the traitorous machinations which gave rise to that rebellion was not any partial change of men or measures, but a total subversion of the existing government and constitution of the country, and the complete destruction of all connexion between the sister kingdom and Great Britain? And finally, is it not notorious, not only from the verdict of the Irish juries (into a comparison between the authority of whose verdict, with that of the verdicts of acquittal of English juries, so emphatically commended by my hon. friend, I will not enter, but will rather refer to other authorities, which will, perhaps, but show what authority these verdicts of acquittal can claim), authorities which can leave no doubt in the mind of any impartial man—which may perhaps show, that legal acquittal is not always a proof of moral innocence; not only, sir, from the verdicts of Irish juries, but from the avowals and confessions of the traitors themselves. Is it not notorious that conspiracies have existed in Ireland, which not only went to sap the foundations of the constitution in Ireland, but which were most pointedly distinguished by an attempt to effect a total separation of that country from the British empire? Conspiracies, not for Catholic emancipation—not for parliamentary reform—but for the total subversion of all government, and for the complete separation of the two countries. Is it then possible to know all these circumstances, and not to feel how deeply interested Great Britain is in the fate of Ireland? or, is it possible

that, to avowals thus made by the self-convicted traitors, not in recantation of past errors, but with a determination to persist in them; avowals made, not in entreaty for pardon for the evils they have done, but in regret for what they have left undone; to avowals of a design that would have laid in ashes the pride of that capital, for whose prosperity and pre-eminence such anxious alarms are now expressed; to avowals that, though their abominable schemes have been detected, they are not as yet defeated; to avowals that, though the first fruits of their labours were lost, their hope still survived that loss; to such avowals, I must ask, is it possible to refuse credit? After the detection, therefore, of these deep and damned plots, is it not expedient, nay, a thing of urgent necessity, to examine into and adopt the most effectual means of counteracting the pernicious consequences that may still flow from them? consequences that not only affect the continuance of the connexion between the two countries, but which deeply strike at the prosperity and very existence of both. When such strong and obvious reasons evidently exist for entering into an investigation of these means, were that investigation even to be proposed only by a simple individual of this house, would it not have been more proper and decorous to point out some other plan that might appear equally feasible and effectual, or at least, to hear what was the nature of the plan to be proposed, rather than pass it over with contempt? and coming, as it now does, from the highest authority, can we reject it in a manner which could scarcely be practised with regard to the most trivial and ordinary motion that could be made in this house?

"I am, however, far from being disposed to deny that the conduct of my hon. friend proceeds from the dictates of true patriotism, from a sincere and anxious regard for what he conceives to be the interest of Ireland. I, sir, though not so nearly connected with that country, still feel the most ardent zeal for its interests and happiness; but in my opinion it would have been more consistent, not only with the love which my hon. friend professes for his native country, but also more reconcileable with the duty which he owes both to that and to this country, to point out what might have escaped his majesty's ministers in their earnest endeavours to hit upon some effectual remedy for the

evils that confessedly exist in Ireland, or at least to have waited in the first instance, to know what are the particulars of that measure, which he is so anxious the house should reject without hearing. My hon. friend and the house must surely feel with how much anxiety they ought to look towards Ireland. The object is, indeed, most important: it is not the making of a provincial regulation, not the adjusting an internal difference, not the arrangement of a plan for the balancing of parties—the object is nothing less than to secure Ireland to us and to herself, and thereby to promote the happiness and security of the whole empire.

"In default, then, of any plan which my hon. friend's sagacity might devise, I must look to the collected sense of Ireland itself, and see what are the opinions on this important subject entertained by those of that country who are acknowledged to be the most enlightened and best instructed, and who are most thoroughly acquainted with all its interests, both local and general. If these opinions were consulted and collected, I do not hesitate to assert that they will be found to favour the measure now in contemplation, and now to pronounce it by far the least objectionable that could be devised; and here, sir, I beg leave to disclaim any intention of availing myself of what my hon. friend has represented to be the ambiguous and equivocal wording of his majesty's message—and to declare plainly and fairly, that the measure, which I understand to be recommended for your consideration, is no other than an incorporating legislative union between the two kingdoms. In recommending, then, to the house to take this measure of an union into their most serious consideration, I should even be willing to put the rebellion out of the question. Rebellion can only be put down by force. But by what means are the agitations to be allayed, and the discords that rend that unhappy country to be silenced or reconciled? These party discords are well described in a pamphlet, which my hon. friend has thought proper to treat with much harshness, and which he attributes to an hon. member of the Irish administration. My hon. friend has treated as absurd the arguments contained in this work, that the union might be advantageous in an equal degree to opposite sects, and hostile interests. For my part, sir, I confess I can see nothing

absurd in the argument. It seems to me not only possible, but highly probable, that both protestant and catholic might gain by an arrangement, which would gratify the ambition of the one, without endangering the safety of the other. That such could be the effect of an union, or rather that such is expected and acknowledged to be the probable effect of it, I am warranted in concluding by reference to the different claims and objections upon which the catholics and protestants stand opposed to each other at present. I prefer arguing from what each party has said for itself, to stating any opinion of my own, as to the propriety or expediency of giving or withholding what remains to be given to the catholics, while Ireland continues separate from Great Britain. For the opinion of the protestant party on this head, I will beg permission to quote a gentleman, a warm advocate for the protestant ascendancy, whose book I have lately read, with more pleasure and more instruction than any other that has been published upon the subject of Ireland. I speak, sir, of the ability and ingenuity of the work. I beg to be understood as giving no opinion upon the questions argued in it. The gentleman to whom I refer is, Dr. Duigenan. This gentleman's book, in answer to Mr. Grattan, contains, in my mind, the most complete statement of the causes and nature of the present distractions of Ireland. It is not only a very ingenuous, but a very learned work (if that were any farther recommendation to it), it more completely demolishes his antagonist, than any controversial work that I remember ever to have read. I quote Dr. Duigenan's work with the less prejudice, as he is one of the few persons who has written upon the subject of Irish affairs of late without giving a distinct opinion for or against an union. Dr. Duigenan is well known to be decidedly hostile to the pretensions of the catholics; he insists upon the necessity of their continued exclusion from a share in the legislature, or in any of the great offices of the state, from which they are at present excluded, but confesses, at the same time, that that necessity of exclusion would be done away by the adoption of some plan similar to that proposed in his majesty's most gracious message. He states it as an unavoidable alternative, either that such a plan, that is, a plan of union, must be adopted, or that some other must be devised for the fortification

of the protestant ascendancy. This fortification Dr. Duigenan would fain build on the re-enactment of the popery code; but he admits that this would be unnecessary in case of an union between the two countries. According to him, one or other of these alternatives must be adopted! Here, therefore, we have the creed of the protestant party; it appears that they are willing to adopt an union, or, in failure of it, to continue a struggle for every thing that was dear to them in rights and pre-eminence, and in religion.

"Ask now the other, the catholic party, and what is their answer? Why, 'Let us have a union, or a continued struggle for that which you have hitherto denied us, viz. a repeal of the remainder of the penal code.' Here, then, are two parties in opposition to each other, who agree in one common opinion. And surely if any middle term can be found to assuage their animosities, and to heal their discords, and reconcile their jarring interests, it should be eagerly and instantly seized and applied. That an union is that middle term, appears the more probable, when we recollect that the popery code took its rise after a proposal for an union; which proposal came from Ireland, but which was rejected by the British government. This rejection produced the popery code. If an union were therefore acceded to, the re-adoption of the popery code would be unnecessary. If it was in consequence of the rejection of an union at a former period that the laws against popery were enacted, it is fair to conclude, that an union would render a similar code unnecessary; that an union would satisfy the friends of the protestant ascendancy, without passing laws against the catholics, and without maintaining those which are yet in force. Unless, then, some plan less liable to these objections is suggested, and better calculated to remedy the existing diseases of Ireland, there is a presumption in favour of that which persons best acquainted with the interests of Ireland, and best informed respecting the contentions that now disturb its internal tranquillity, are inclined to countenance and adopt.

"But then it is contended, that there is something in the present crisis, which renders this an improper period to propose this measure. This surely is strange reasoning. If an union would quiet the agitation of that country, and restore it to rest,

why, should we wait till the struggle was over before we administer the remedy? Surely, if two combatants could be parted, it would be wrong to postpone the interference till the battle was over. Some gentlemen, indeed, are so fond of a boxing match, that they had rather see it fought out, than that the parties should be separated; but when it is recollected that the parties in this contest are two great national divisions, and that the prize they are contending for is the existence of the government and the connexion between the two countries, it surely must be a rash fondness for the sport, that would delay for a moment the plan of interference and reconciliation. What else is there in the circumstances of the present time, which renders the measure improper? It cannot be that the continued efforts of France for the subjugation of Ireland have been detected and defeated; because whatever delicacy there might exist in interfering between two national parties, there can be none in preserving Ireland from France.

"It is still the avowed design of France to attempt an invasion of Ireland, and to complete a separation of it from Great Britain; and surely my hon. friend is not disposed to bar any thing that may effectually interfere between France and her intended prey? Is he for waiting till France shall fit out another fleet, and disembark another army in Ireland, to meet with the same fate that attended her former rashness and audacity, before he would endeavour to reconcile and unite all parties; and thus consolidate the interests and the resources, and the strength of the whole empire? But something is insinuated of the deliberations of Ireland being influenced and intimidated by the armed force now in the country. My hon. friend has strongly insisted upon the intimidation, which the presence of that armed force is likely to impress on the public mind in Ireland. It is by promoting such an union of interests and affections, as this measure will insure, that we may hope to remove the necessity of keeping a large armed force in Ireland; and, by removing that necessity, my hon. friend would remove one of the objects of his own censure and complaint. But, in truth, the effects of that intimidation, which my hon. friend so much apprehended, are not easy to discover; it surely does not seem to affect either the liberty of speech, or the liberty of the press; both of which

have been pretty freely indulged in on the present subject. Every gentleman, I believe, is acquainted with the circumstance of several persons in Ireland having declared their sentiments on the subject freely, and without any appearance of being intimidated by an armed force. A very respectable gentleman in Ireland, who fills the same situation which you, sir, fill in this country with so much credit, and so much advantage to this house and to the public, has availed himself of the opportunity of delivering those sentiments out of doors, which he could not do within, in a manner that does not savour of intimidation on one side of the question at least. But God forbid that such intimidation should prevail. It is natural, indeed, that Dublin, under the influence of the first impression, and of the first ardour that has been kindled by the agitation of a question so materially involving its peculiar interests, should be warm, if not intemperate, in the expression of its sentiments. Dublin is as yet loud in its reprobation of the measure; but other places of note and celebrity in Ireland, places that stand as high in commercial importance, are on the contrary as forward in bestowing upon it their most marked and decided approbation.

"But, sir, my hon. friend wandered from the limits to which he promised to confine his observations, when he thought himself at liberty to compare the incorporation of the two legislatures, with the incorporations made by France for the farther aggrandisement of her already gigantic dominions. In what possible point of view can such a comparison be instituted between the conduct of the two countries? Does France attempt to incorporate other countries for the purpose of extending their common commercial interests? Or have the French been the authors, not of contributions and confiscations, but of means of wealth and prosperity to the incorporated countries? And have they only required of them to bear a common share in common terms, for the defence and advancement of a common cause? Do the countries, which they endeavour to incorporate, resemble France in constitution and in law? Do they contain persons who speak the same language, who are attached to the same customs, who are linked together by the ties of affinity and blood? If not, where is the comparison between the state of the countries, which France has chosen to incorporate, and that

which exists between Great Britain and Ireland? Where is the analogy between such discordant connexions, and one between two countries united already by the closest ties of friendship, by blood, by the same species of government, both obeying the same sovereign, and enjoying the same constitution?

"Is there any Irish protestant, however anxious and apprehensive of any interference on the part of Great Britain, which might shake what they considered as the only sure foundations of the protestant ascendancy;—is there any Irish catholic, however galled and angry at the exclusion of his seat from parliament, and from a few offices of public trust, however anxious for catholic emancipation (as it is called), who found on these, their partial grievances and general dislike to the British constitution? Have we as yet found those who would tell us, 'Take away your boasted constitution, it does not speak our language; it is not congenial to our inveterate habits; it does not accord with the usual tone of our feelings?' No; none, undoubtedly, except those of whom I am loath to speak as part of the people of Ireland, the traitors, who have attempted the subversion of that constitution which we cherish, and a dissolution of that connexion on which depend the safety, the interests, the prosperity, and the existence of the two kingdoms. The most strenuous friends of reform in Ireland have frequently said, that they wanted only to be brought nearer to the perfection of England; and desired that they might enjoy the substantial blessings of the constitution; that they might be blest, not with a mock splendour under which they could neither enjoy security, nor thrive in prosperity, but the real, inspiriting, and enlivening sunshine of English liberty. Ireland, they know and feel, would indeed be the paradise of real blessings, if British connexion could be extended there in a manner which might bring about a resemblance between the situation of the people there and in this country.

"But among all these people, whom the French had sucked into the vortex of their despotism, was there one who wished for the constitution offered to them? Did the people of Piedmont, for instance, tell them 'We love your liberty and your constitution; let us share the blessings of both?' did they say, 'We are tired of a king—give us your Five Directors; we dislike the

ensigns of royalty—give us a tri-coloured cockade; we dislike our government—take away our king, his family, and those friends who have supported him, and who have prompted him to exertion?' No; the people of Piedmont have said no such thing. Let the house but recollect what passed in Piedmont, in the last act of the dreadful tragedy the French had performed in that country—a beloved monarch, for no crime against his people (to use the cant of modern republicanism), for no breach of faith with his new allies, was ignominiously driven from his dominions, for no other reason than because the French wanted Piedmont for a retreat for their army, in case it should be compelled to retreat from Italy. The unhappy monarch, as the last degradation of human infamy, was obliged, *on his knees*, to beg the French to let him take his brother (the duc d'Aoste) with him, whom the French wanted to keep as a pledge for his good conduct. Good God! to ask a pledge for his good conduct, after they had driven him from his dominions, and forced him, poor, powerless, and degraded, to seek refuge in Sardinia—to compel a sovereign, who had been guilty of no offence to God or man, to grovel on his knees, and supplicate for mercy and compassion at the bloody hands of the agents of the Directory! Let the house consider of this scene, and then let them pronounce whether, whatever be the result of this question, it was candid to treat it in such a manner, to compare the discussion of two free and independent states, upon a plan calculated for their mutual benefit, with the unprecedented tyranny of France.

"In one view, indeed, sir, the incorporations of France ought to be wholly out of our consideration. It is upon a just and founded apprehension of the designs of France upon Ireland, that his majesty has called upon the parliament of both kingdoms, to devise the means of giving additional strength and solidity to that part of the empire, which at present is most open to attack, and of communicating to Ireland, in the fullest manner, the power, the vigour, and the stability of Great Britain. If Ireland obviously is not in a condition to defend itself against the threatened attacks of foreign power, and consequently stands in need of the assistance of Great Britain, it is a question certainly of serious importance, whether that assistance may not be best given by an incorporation of the two countries. The

measure, however, is not forced—God forbid that it should be forced—upon Ireland; but given for the consideration, for the mature and deliberate judgment of the Irish parliament, who alone are competent finally to reject or adopt it. Be it, however, our consolation, at least, if most unhappily for Ireland, most unhappily for the empire, the measure should not be adopted, that the British parliament has done its part towards carrying it into effect—the recommendation of the common sovereign of both countries, towards knitting together under this paternal government, the disjointed members of this mighty empire, mighty even in its present state, but when inseparably united in all its parts, likely to become invincible, if not unassailable. For we are to remember, that it is not the local or military weakness alone of Ireland that has marked her out as a prey to the arms and intrigues of our enemy. Do not let us think, that if we rescue Ireland from subjugation by those arms, and from subversion by those intrigues, by the measure at present under our contemplation, we are adopting a remedy disproportioned to the danger, or erecting permanent fortifications against an attack that is but temporary, and may be felt no more.

"Much as we have been in the habit of considering the nature of the French revolution, and painfully as it has been brought home to our minds and feelings, by the experience of those tremendous calamities, which have been occasioned by it throughout the nations which surround us; little, indeed, have we been benefited by the experience of the sufferings of others; and imperfect, indeed, has been our considerations of their nature and extent—if we have not been taught that the moral influence of the French revolution is not likely speedily to pass away—that even if we could suppose peace to be restored to Europe, and the kingdoms, whose heads have been bound by the storm, or even the states which it has torn up by the roots, to be replaced in their former political situation, even under this supposition (improbable enough, God knows) the latent mischief, the principal of future convulsions in the moral and political world, would remain. Where is the country, whose state of society is more adapted to receive and cherish, and mature the principles of the French revolution—principles which go to

array the physical force of the lower orders of the people, against the educated and governing parts of the community, to arm poverty against property, labour against privilege, and each class of life against its superior, than a country like Ireland, where the inhabitants are in general poor and uncivilized, and where religious distinctions prevail to such an extent? In such a country, the seeds of the French revolution must be sown deep indeed! It is not, I am afraid, the act of a day or a year which will destroy its baneful influence. The government of France know, that wherever their principles are scattered, it will be difficult to eradicate them: they know that they had taken root in Ireland. Is it not then likely that they will attempt to foster and support them? It is to put an end to those hopes of our enemies—it is to put Ireland out of danger, both from foreign attack and domestic disturbance and distraction—it is, in every point of view, to ameliorate her condition that this measure is proposed. A measure, the necessity of which, arising from the causes which I have stated, argues, however, no blame to the people, or to the government of Ireland. The fault is in the nature of things, in the present disposition of property, and division of the classes of society in that country. They want commerce, they want capital, they want a generally diffused spirit of industry and order; they want those classes of men who connect the upper and lower orders of society, and who thereby blend together and harmonize the whole. But it is not an act of parliament that would effect these great and beneficial objects; no, it is only by a connexion with a country, which has capital, which has commerce, which has that middle class of men, of whom skill and enterprise, and sober orderly habits are the peculiar characteristics: it is by such a connexion alone, diffusing these blessings, diffusing the means of wealth, and the example and encouragement of industry throughout the sister kingdom, it is by such a connexion that so great and beneficial a change must be effected. We have seen partial remedies tried —but, as might be expected, with partial success. We have seen manufactures flourish—but the cottage, which borders on the manufactory, remaining in wretchedness. There remains one great experiment to be tried: If, from the concurrent testimony of opposite sects and parties, we are warranted in be-

lieving, that it may be made with advantage to all; if, in addition to the immediate safety of Ireland, and the strengthening of the empire, it promise to produce in the interior of that country consequences so beneficial to its internal prosperity and happiness. Surely we have heard no arguments to-night which ought to prevent the house from entering upon a discussion of the subject.

"On what other circumstances then, connected with the time, or with the manner of bringing forward this proposition, is it contended that the parliament or people of Ireland should receive it with jealousy and suspicion? If, indeed, this proposition had come, after a series of attempts on the part of Great Britain, to injure and depress her sister country, to check her progress in commercial prosperity, to discourage her advances to wealth and civilization, to crush and control her legislative independence, and to over-rule all attempts at the improvement of the laws and constitution, it might justly be entertained with distrust, and proceeded upon with hesitation. If, seeing and deploring the present situation of Ireland, Great Britain had yet suggested no remedy for them herself, and had thrown difficulties in the way of what had been suggested by Ireland, and had then come forward with this as the first offer of her advice and assistance, Ireland might perhaps ask, where the spirit of benevolence had slept so long, and why she had never before experienced the anxious care of England, until it was now extended to them in the first instance, accompanied by a proposal for a union? But was that the case? Was this the first remedy that England had proposed, or had she ever refused assistance to Ireland? It has been said, that for the space of three hundred years we had oppressed Ireland. It is happy, however, for the present generation, that it has but little of the guilt of that oppression to answer for. Surely, for the last twenty years, the conduct of England towards Ireland has been a series of concessions. Ireland desired an octennial parliament; it was granted. They wished for an independent legislature, and their wishes were complied with. They desired a free trade, and it was given to them. A very large body of the people of Ireland prayed for a repeal of part of the penal code, which they thought oppressed them; the English government interposed, with an

opinion strongly pronounced in favour of their petition, and its interference was successful.

"Sir, it is not my intention to go into any detail upon the subject of this great measure at present, nor to state the nature of the terms upon which a union may best be concluded. That statement, whenever it comes, it is fit that the house should hear from higher authority than mine. And this is by no means the stage of the business, at which it can come with effect and propriety. The object which I have in view, sir, in what I have taken the liberty to address to the house, is to entreat them to recollect, that in adopting the amendment of my hon. friend, and refusing to go into a consideration of the address, they would put an end to the only great and comprehensive view that had ever been taken in this house of the affairs of Ireland. The plans proposed respecting Ireland, except in the case of the Irish propositions, were in general to answer some immediate purpose, to catch at a little popularity by decrying one party and extolling another; and by echoing in this country the distractions and disturbances of that, whenever it has so happened that the affairs of this country have furnished no immediate ground for popular declamation.

"It is a little curious to consider what was the conduct of that party when in government towards Ireland, from whom the opposition to this measure comes. Did those gentlemen, when they had the power in their hands, take a great and comprehensive view of the state of Ireland? No; when they were proposing a measure respecting Ireland, they overlooked three-fourths of its inhabitants. It was then said by those gentlemen, that the work was done, and the troubles of Ireland appeased; and yet, in their plan, the word Catholic never once occurred. Such was the wisdom, the comprehension, the grandeur of conception, that marked the boasted final adjustment of 1782.

"And now, sir, observe the manner in which every thing that is attempted to be done for the safety of Ireland, and for the benefit of both countries, is treated—What are the weapons by which every thing that my right hon. friend proposes, with regard to Ireland, is attempted to be beaten down? What are the substitutes recommended for every measure which he would take for saving and tranquillizing Ireland? Why, Catholic

emancipation and parliamentary reform. How came the final adjusters not to think sixteen years ago of Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform? With respect to the latter, the hon. gentleman, who was then minister, directed the lord lieutenant to put down that question at all events; and as to Catholic emancipation, not one word was said about it.

"Sir, it is little praise of the measure now proposed for our consideration to say that it will be more perfect and comprehensive than the final adjustment of 1782. The question, indeed, which I conjure the house not to refuse to consider, is not a question of slight importance—it is a question upon which depends the safety of one member of the empire, and the happiness of the whole. I conjure the house to recollect, What is the hazard in which Ireland stands, and what have been our fears and our anxiety for her preservation? If in estimating the splendid victories which have illustrated the naval annals of this country, and spread through the world the terror of her fame, we have ranked even with the most brilliant those by which Ireland has been saved—let the same sentiment induce us to receive with kindness, and to discuss with a sincere desire to bring it to perfection, a measure which is calculated to perpetuate to Ireland the safety which is the fruit of these victories, and to procure to her solid and permanent blessings far beyond the power of any victories to bestow!—Sitting here as we do in tranquillity and security, protected by a powerful and energetic government, in the bosom of a consenting and united people—with no invasion to resist, no rebellion to coerce or to appease,—let us feel for the distractions and disquietudes of a country, which the ties of nature, of friendship, of common language, manners, and interests, of laws and constitutions similar to our own, bind so indissolubly to ourselves, that separation would be to each, and to both of us, destructive. And let us, at least, not refuse to consider of a question which involves in itself the best, perhaps the only means, which can at once and for ever remove the dangers, and quiet the dissensions of Ireland, while they cement the connexion which it is equally essential to both countries to strengthen."—*The King's Message relative to a Union with Ireland, Jan.* 23, 1799.

It will be observed, that in this and in subsequent speeches on the same subject, Mr. Canning carefully avoids committing himself on the Catholic question. That his views were decidedly favourable to the measure even at this early period in his parliamentary career, we have no reason to doubt; his motive for so many years abstaining from supporting it, he has assigned to his constituents at Liverpool, and which will not be out of place now allusion has been made to the subject. With regard to the Catholic question Mr. Canning observes,

"I have always treated that question not in a religious, but in a political point of view. I have considered it has a question of political expediency; and, in every thing that I have agreed to, and every thing that I have proposed respecting it, I have always, with scrupulous care and anxiety, proposed to guard and fence, from even the most remote apprehension of danger, that happy constitution, in church and state, under which we have the good fortune to flourish; and one of the great blessings of which is, in my opinion, that, being itself secure and firmly seated in the habits and affections of the people, it enables us to be liberal, without danger, to all who are within the reach of its influence, and to dispense its blessings to others without hazarding them ourselves.

"Gentlemen, in this view, and with such qualifications, it is that, considering the concessions already made to the Catholics (wisely or not it is too late to inquire) in the course of the present reign, as having placed that numerous class of his majesty's subjects, particularly in Ireland, in a state very different from that in which they stood when the code enacted against them was in full operation; as having advanced them in wealth, power, and intelligence; as having taught them to look upon themselves as admissible to the civil franchises of the state, in which they have been permitted to acquire property, and encouraged to pursue industrious and useful occupations; it is, I say, in this view, and with the qualifications which I have de-

scribed, that I entertain and have acted upon the opinion, which I honestly avow, that the period of religious danger being, as I think it is, passed by, the state of this country, the state of Europe and of the world, point out the political expediency of repealing those civil disabilities which are the remnant of a code whose principle has been already repealed. I certainly think that this may be done without danger. I think that the circumstances of the times recommend it.

"But, though these are my opinions upon that question, I know well that many respectable, pious, and worthy persons differ from me. And there is no opinion which I hold more strongly than this, that to be settled happily, this great question must be settled peaceably, and with the full concurrence and good-will of all classes of the Protestant community. I am sanguine enough to believe, that, upon full, deliberate, and temperate discussion, such a concurrence may be obtained. I am sanguine enough to think, that I see my way to such arrangements as might allay the discontent of one party, and quiet the scruples of the other. To give to one party a triumph over the other has never entered into my contemplation.

"This is not the place nor the time to enter into the very delicate and difficult discussion of the arrangements which might be necessary for a final and amicable adjustment. But when I have said, that I think it desirable, and that I think it possible, to effect such an arrangement, of that desirableness, and even of that possibility, the mature conviction and assent of the Protestant community form, in my view, one essential part.

"Gentlemen, these opinions are not new opinions of mine, though I hear, also, that I am accused of having recently adopted them. Gentlemen, that accusation is false. These opinions I imbibed, inherited from Mr. Pitt. Had he lived, I have no doubt he would now have been acting upon them. I say *now*, because from Mr. Pitt I also inherited the determination never myself to stir, and to resist any attempt on the part of others to stir the Catholic question, during the lifetime—the living reign—of our beloved and venerated sovereign. While he lived to the cares and duties of his station, I did resist all attempts to force that question into discussion, quite as earnestly as if I had myself thought differently upon it."

In the noble struggle to obtain the abolition of the slave trade, we have already remarked Mr. Canning lent the powerful aid of his talents; and it was in this session, and on the 1st of March of this year, that he enrolled his name as one of its mightiest champions. In the speech delivered on this occasion, the advocate is forgotten in the man. Admiration and affection are kindled together in our bosoms, while we listen to eloquence, whose principal charm is, that it flows from the heart. Though a splendid effort of the intellect, its unsophisticated humanity renders it irresistible. We give it, therefore, as part and parcel of Mr. Canning's intellectual and moral nature; and we are happy to catch and retain this striking feature of the philanthropist and the statesman.

"Mr. Canning began by observing, that the principal difficulties heretofore thrown in the way of those who addressed the house on that side of the present question, to which he professed himself to belong, had usually arisen from the triteness of the several topics of debate, and from the irksomeness of being constantly obliged to meet the same unchanging assertions, with the same invariable and unanswered arguments. The debate of to-night had afforded more novelty than he ever before remembered to have heard introduced upon this subject: and the novelty of the topics stated by the different opponents of the abolition, had been still farther diversified by the variety of lights in which even the same topics had been placed by the different gentlemen who made use of them. Not only had a totally new set of assertions, a new train of reasoning, been adopted by the advocates of the slave trade in general; but still farther to perplex those who combated against them, to extend still more widely their line of defence, they had so contrived it, that no two gentlemen had handled the same arms in the same manner; no two speeches, no two arguments, which the house had that night heard on that side of the question, but what had been for the most part inconsistent with each other. Not that if this novelty

and variety had been wanting to the debate he should have felt any shame in going over again the path which had been so often trodden, and meeting again the miserable pleas so often urged in favour of this abominable trade, and so often refuted, with the same weapons of refutation, which had already been employed against them. The shame was not in the advancement of old arguments, but in the maintenance of inveterate abuses. It was not the pride of victory that was to be sought, it was not the dexterity of contest that was to be applauded, on such a question. And whatever triumph might arise from seeing that the old arguments for the abolition continued unanswered, was in his mind effectually damped by the regret that a mischief so inveterate and detestable remained unabated.

"The first variety introduced into the debate, which he should have occasion to notice was, the variety of construction applied by different gentlemen, particularly by his right hon. friend (Mr. Dundas), and by the hon. gentleman behind him (Mr. Sewell), to the very remarkable, and, as he thought, the very plain and intelligible address of the assembly of Jamaica. The house would recollect the situation in which the question of the abolition now stood, a situation in which it had been placed by the motion of an hon. friend of his (Mr. C. Ellis) two years ago, a motion which had proceeded from the purest benevolence, and which had been brought forward in a manner which had done equal honour to the abilities and to the feelings of his hon. friend. The professed purpose of this motion was, to arrive gradually at the same end, which other gentlemen, and he among the number, were desirous of reaching immediately—the final and entire termination of the trade in slaves. The mode proposed by his hon. friend's motion was, to address the king to recommend to the colonial assemblies to take such measures as, besides meliorating the condition of the negroes upon the islands, securing to them the immediate and active protection of the law when aggrieved by their masters, and other objects equally desirable, should ultimately lead to the final termination of the trade. This motion was adopted by the house. It seemed, indeed, to the friends of the abolition to be a slow, and perhaps not very efficacious, mode of obtaining the object proposed. But there was no doubt of the sincerity with

which it was intended to be followed up, by all the influence which those who supported it here could exert in the colonies: and as all the great West India proprietors, and all who had hitherto concurred in opposing the immediate abolition of the trade, concurred also in this address, praying for a recommendation from the throne to the assemblies, of such measures as should lead in the end to a termination (abolition it seems is a harsh word—but to a termination) of the trade: it appeared that the opposers of the slave trade had gained at least thus much by the carrying of his hon. friend's motion—that there was no longer to be apprehended in that house any direct support of the trade, any assertion that it was a trade proper to be carried on longer than was absolutely necessary, or that it could be necessary to carry it on for ever. The only point hereafter to be argued by those who doubted the propriety of instant abolition was, whether or not the colonial assemblies were, in fact, taking such steps as evinced a sincere desire to fulfil the expressed purpose of his hon. friend's motion, to take such measures as should lead, and to take them with the intent and view of their leading, to the final termination of the trade.

"If it should appear that the assemblies were taking no such measures, or were taking no matter what measures with no such view, the question of immediate abolition of the trade by the legislature of this country stood clearer, and came forward with more irresistible force than ever. For, as it was no longer opposed by the argument, however false and detestable, that the trade was fit to be continued, as there were now not two opinions professed (whatever might be entertained) as to the propriety of its being ultimately terminated: as the only doubts professed to be entertained were with regard to the best mode of effecting this termination; as the modes could be but two, the first by an act of this country stopping the trade, the second by the acts of the colonial assemblies rendering its continuance unnecessary: it was naturally to be presumed, that if the latter of these modes should, upon trial, be found unlikely to produce the effect which we all alike have in view and at heart, there could be no longer any hesitation as to the propriety and necessity of recurring to the other. That the trade must be terminated was agreed on all hands. If the colonial assemblies evinced both the power

and the disposition to bring about its termination, well: those who argued against the abolition by this country had then some ground to stand upon. But how if the colonial assemblies showed either that that they could not, or that they would not, do any such thing? Were not those who have agreed that the trade must be terminated in one way or other, bound by their own argument, bound by every principle of fair reasoning and fair dealing, by every principle of consistency with their own acts and words, with the acts and words which the British parliament adopted from them, to vote for the abolition by the British parliament?

"This then was the state of the question now before the house. The point for their consideration was, whether the colonial assemblies appeared, by the papers on the table, to have entered heartily and *bonâ fide* into measures, such as were recommended to them by his majesty, in consequence of the address of the House of Commons in April, 1797, and with the view and intent with which that address was framed, with a view to the termination of the trade. If they had done so—he did not say (God forbid that he should) that those gentlemen who had voted against that address, conceiving the mode pointed out in it to be inefficient, and who voted the same year for the direct abolition, could be at all embarrassed as to the vote which they ought to give in favour of the abolition this year; but he did admit that in that case those who had voted for that address, and who had relied upon the efficacy of the measures which it went to recommend, would be fairly intitled to argue that their experiment having succeeded thus far, should continue to be tried a little longer.

"But what is the real state of this case? What was the conduct, what was the language of the assembly of Jamaica? And what were the interpretations to which the hon. gentleman (Mr. Sewell) and his right hon. friend were obliged to have recourse, to palliate and excuse it? The assembly of Jamaica pass two acts—very good, for aught he knew, as matter of regulation—one for increasing the salaries of the clergy, the other for laying a duty, amounting to a prohibition, on all negro slaves imported into the island above the age of twenty-five years. These two acts they transmit to the king, as what they

have done to carry into effect his majesty's gracious recommendation. It was hardly necessary for them to add that they were not intended to terminate the slave trade, because they might have defied the ingenuity of man to discover what there was in them that could, by any possibility, tend to its termination. But the assembly of Jamaica was too open and ingenuous to leave its meaning to be found out by implication or construction. They speak out manfully. They tell his majesty plainly, that in what they have done, 'They have been actuated by views of humanity only, and not with any view to the termination of the slave trade.' Could any thing be more plain, simple, and intelligible? Was there a man in the house, was there a child that could just read, who, until his right hon. friend's ingenuity, and that of the hon. gentleman had been exercised upon this passage, could have for a moment mistaken its meaning? Here then the question, in all fairness and justice, ought to end. All parties were agreed that the slave trade ought to be terminated. There are two ways of terminating it; by this house, or by the colonial legislatures. The colonial legislatures tell you plainly they will not terminate it. What remains, but for this house to exercise its own power—always, in his mind, the best, but now clearly proved to be the only medium through which the termination of the trade could be effected?

"But 'No,' said his right hon. friend: 'you mistake this matter: you misconstrue the words of the assembly of Jamaica. They are not to be taken in their direct and obvious sense. These colonists are never to be understood precisely as they speak. When they say, *not* with a view to the termination of the trade, they mean, *with* a view to the termination of the trade.' Indeed! This did appear at first sight no small variation from the obvious meaning of the text. And it must be allowed that, if the assembly of Jamaica spoke out honestly, his right hon friend interpreted freely. There was nothing, in truth, which he more admired among the many great and statesmanlike qualities of his right hon. friend's mind, than the boldness and decision with which he was in the habit of meeting every question. There was no quirk, no gloss, no subterfuge. He always spoke his meaning plainly and openly, and undisguisedly. But surely those qualities which his right hon. friend

so eminently possessed himself, ought to have disinclined him to become the champion of an assembly, which had (if this interpretation was true), acted in a manner so directly the reverse of what he himself approved and practised—an assembly which (if his right hon. friend's interpretation was true), spoke one thing, and meant another; which misrepresented its own proceedings, and disavowed its own objects: which averred itself to be shaping its course towards one quarter, while it was steering directly to another.

"This would surely be singular enough, if it were upon a matter of mere curiosity and speculation that his right hon. friend had thus indulged his ingenuity. But when he gravely recommended to the house of commons to act upon such an interpretation—when he desired them to believe that the assembly of Jamaica were sincerely pursuing an object, which they solemnly disavowed—when he insisted upon their forbearing to employ the means which they undoubtedly had in their power, and forbearing, in the confidence that the object would be better attained through those, who utterly disclaim any intention, who utterly deny the propriety of pursuing it; surely, when such a line of conduct was recommended to the house, even by such high authority as his right hon. friend, the house would pause awhile to question the reasonableness of a plan, so remote from all the common principles of human conduct and so contrary to all the ordinary practice of human life.

"But, perhaps, it was not intended that they should believe the assembly of Jamaica to be sincere in their intention of terminating the Slave trade, at the moment when they professed their resolution to continue and maintain it;—perhaps it was only meant that, by taking such measures as they were now taking, that is, by raising the salaries of their clergy, and limiting the age of their new negroes, the assembly of Jamaica will, in spite of themselves, gradually bring to a termination the trade, which they declare themselves so bent upon maintaining: and the house was therefore called upon to give credit, not to the good intention of the assembly, but to the tendency of their actions to counterwork their ill-intentions; not to the ardour with which they would labour for the extinction of the trade, and the judgment with which they would devise means for that

end; but to their ill-contrivance and impolicy in selecting such measures for the continuance of the trade, as would in the result lead, not only without their concurrence, but against their wish, to its abolition. Now, if this were what the house was to understand to be recommended by his right hon. friend, he could not forbear asking, whether this really was a line of policy which could be adopted with prudence, or with any hope, or expectation of success, by men looking steadily to an object, and anxious for the attainment of it? Would any one in private life, who had a favourite purpose to execute, which he had the choice of, either to execute himself, or through another person, prefer trusting the execution of it to that other person, after an avowal that he had no desire to execute it at all; trusting it to him, in the confidence that the agent would effect by mistake what he, the principal, might more easily effect by his own direct endeavours? But farther, was this a fair or flattering mode of treating between the legislatures of two countries? Would it please the assembly of Jamaica to be told, 'we give no credit to your professions; but we have no apprehension of what you can do to thwart our purposes. Proceed in your own way—counteract us, if you will—but in the end you shall find, to your confusion, that you have only been counteracting yourselves; that you have done the very thing that we wished to be done, and which you determined not to do.' If they were to be cautioned, as the house had been, to speak with respect of the assembly of Jamaica, is this the most respectful strain in which it is possible to address them? or would it not be more fair and manly, and had not the assembly of Jamaica deserved, by the fair and manly way in which they had declared their determination, that the house of commons should say to them, 'you have dealt honestly by us. We think the Slave trade ought not to subsist. If you had thought the same, we would willingly have left it to you to devise the means of putting an end to it. But you tell us plainly, that such is not your opinion. You tell us plainly that so far as depends upon you, the Slave trade shall be carried on to the end of time; that you see no prospect, that you see no reason, that you entertain no wish, that you will take no step for its termination. The avowal is frank, whatever we may think of the principle. There is no

delusion, no hypocrisy in it. We thank you for your openness. It appears from what you say, that we must do our own work, if we would have it done at all—and, please God, we will set about doing it.' Would not this be a more reasonable, and a more just mode of proceeding, than by construing, with his right hon. friend, the words of the assembly of Jamaica, in a way the very reverse of their obvious and evident meaning, to charge that assembly with falsehoods and inconsistency, in order to find an excuse to the house for its own supineness, and to reconcile it to the abandonment of its own object, and its own power?

"His right hon. friend, however, could of course pretend to no higher authority than conjecture, for his interpretation. But the other hon. gentleman, as agent for the island of Jamaica, might be considered as a more skilful and accurate interpreter of the language of the assembly; and his interpretation was therefore to be listened to with the utmost deference and attention; and a very curious and ingenious interpretation it was. The hon. gentleman did not venture, like his right hon. friend, to represent the assembly as meaning the direct reverse of what they had stated. No; he knew too well the real bias and inclination of their minds, to take such a liberty with their words. But he contrived to gloss over the too sharp and prominent expression of their resolution to persevere in the Slave trade to all eternity, to cultivate, to improve, to increase, to cherish it—this he endeavoured to gloss over by an interpretation that should do neither good nor harm:—he could not hope to persuade us that the assembly meant well, as to the termination of the trade; it was a great point gained, if he could persuade the house that they meant nothing. According to that hon. gentleman's construction, the word 'NOT with any view to the termination of the Slave trade,' meant, 'not influenced in what they are doing by any apprehension that the Slave trade will be terminated; not induced thereto by the threats of abolition.' Upon this interpretation, he would only say, that if there was one unprejudiced man in the house who would get up, and laying his hand upon his heart would gravely aver, that he in his conscience believed this to be the true intent and meaning of the passage, he would give up the question. He paused to see if any man would venture to do so——

"As no man ventured to make such an averment, he must conclude that the house felt, as he did, that the passage was to be taken in its plain, obvious, unmistakeable sense: that the assembly of Jamaica, while it was represented here as taking measures to carry into effect the recommendation of the king founded upon the address of the house of commons for the termination of the Slave trade, had not any view to any such termination. Such was their plain language. But if there could be any additional light thrown upon the sense of a passage already as clear as noon day, what followed in the address was in itself the best commentary upon it. The two passages, indeed, mutually illustrated each other. 'The right of obtaining labourers from Africa.' The right! He had learnt, indeed, by painful experience of what had of late years passed in the world, to associate the word right with ideas very different from those which, in old times, it was calculated to convey. He had learnt to regard the mention of rights as prefatory to bloody, destructive, and desolating doctrines, hostile to the happiness and to the freedom of mankind. Such had been the lesson which he had learnt from the rights of man. But never, even in the practical application of that detested and pernicious doctrine, never, he believed, had the word right been so shamefully affixed to murder, to devastation, to the invasion of public independence, to the pollution and destruction of private happiness, to gross and unpalliated injustice, to the spreading of misery and mourning over the earth, to the massacre of innocent individuals, and to the extermination of unoffending nations; never before was the word right so prostituted and misapplied, as when the right to trade in man's blood was asserted by the enlighted government of a civilized country. It was not wonderful that the slavery of Africa should be described in a term consecrated to French freedom.

"'But it was the right to *import labourers*'—gentle words! Not slaves, not for the world, not 'to trade in slaves,' but to 'import labourers;' 'The right to import labourers from Africa is secured to your majesty's faithful subjects in this colony, by several British acts of parliament,' &c. They then proceeded to state in the next paragraph, that they 'have the utmost reliance on his majesty's paternal goodness, that this right should

remain inviolate as long as they should remain faithful to his majesty, and true to the allegiance which they owe to the imperial crown of Great Britain.' He quoted this passage particularly for the purpose of disclaiming any intention of countenancing the implication which the house had been so justly cautioned not to entertain, that the allegiance of the assembly was made dependent on the continuance of the Slave trade. He believed no such thing. He would have wished indeed, that the two subjects had not been coupled so closely in words; but he had no doubt of the loyalty of the colonial assemblies. They had given ample and honourable proofs of their affection for this country. He had no doubt that they would, under all circumstances, continue to do so. And he had as little doubt that it was not by obeying their local and transitory prejudices, nor by yielding to their temporary passions, but by consulting and securing their permanent interest, honour, and happiness, that Great Britain would best deserve, and most effectually secure, their connexion and attachment.

"But whatever might be the general credit which he was willing to give to the legislature of Jamaica for its readiness to acknowledge the paternal and superintending care of the British parliament; when he heard such acts of that legislature as were now on the table of the house, quoted as substantial proofs of their intention to carry into effect the declared opinion of the British parliament, that measures ought to be taken for the termination of the Slave trade (an intention which the legislature of Jamaica itself unequivocally disclaimed), he could not refrain from expressing a sentiment both of astonishment and indignation. 'Never mind their declarations,' said the hon. gentleman, the agent for Jamaica; 'look to their acts.' He looked to their acts; and what did he find? A better maintenance secured to their parochial clergy—good. What has this to do with the termination of the Slave trade? But what more? An act imposing a duty amounting to prohibition upon the importation of slaves above 25 years old. This too was good, and he thanked the hon. gentleman for calling upon him to examine it; but it was good, only as it proved the utter falsehood and futility of almost every argument upon which the propriety of the Slave trade had ever been attempted to be defended, and

the impossibility of abolishing it attempted to be proved, from the first discussion of the subject up to the present hour.

"First, then, here is a duty amounting to a prohibition. So it was possible to prohibit then? And all the arguments that the house had been in the habit of hearing, how vain and fruitless it would be to endeavour to establish Custom-house regulations, which should restrict the trade, or prevent contraband importation,—all these arguments were overthrown from their foundation by a single phrase of the legislative assembly of Jamaica. But would it be said, that though to prohibit importation altogether would be impossible, to limit it within certain bounds, taking the age of the negroes for your rule, would be very easy and practicable? This might be so, but it certainly did not strike one at the first view, as creating an additional facility, but rather an additional difficulty, that the custom-house officer was directed to prevent, not the importation of negroes, but the importation of negroes above twenty-five years old. For how, after all, was this to be known? Was it in Africa that the age was to be ascertained? By what species of parish register? By what testimony, verbal or written? Or was there some mark of mouth by which the age of those unfortunate beings was to be distinguished? Or rather, was not the whole regulation known and felt to be nugatory? And if such a regulation had been proposed by the friends of the abolition, would it not have been met with scorn and mockery, and answered merely by a sally against the ignorance and temerity of speculative reasoners upon practical subjects?

"But, supposing this regulation could be made effectual, mark how it was contrived to run directly in the teeth of all that had ever been advanced, to give a colour of justice to the exportation of negroes from Africa. The house had often been told that the unhappy victims who were torn from their country by our slave traders were, in fact, saved from a worse fate at home; for that they were convicts, or prisoners of war, who, if not sold for slaves, would be put to death: the slave traders would scorn to take any but such as were thus to be rescued from death by slavery—they, in fact, acted from motives of kindness to those whom they purchased; it would be barbarous to shut up the only issue which was left for those who were

condemned to torture and destruction, to escape. All this had been gravely argued. But mark how the assembly of Jamaica has put it down. They will take nothing above 25 years old. How was this? Had they found some secret by which they could prevent any African from being guilty of a crime, any African from being made a prisoner of war, after he was five and twenty? Or did they mean to consign all those who were above that age, and were yet, in spite of this salutary regulation which precluded them from all escape from their country, so headstrong as to become convicts and captives, to consign them unpityingly to their fate? The women too—they were not to be more than twenty-five. Their crime the house had often been told (as they could not be prisoners of war) was witchcraft. What secret had the assembly of Jamaica found by which the practice of that dark art (which he was far from meaning to defend) could be confined within the limits of five and twenty? Or were they determined to rescue none but the young witches, and to leave the old ones to their fate? He was ashamed to appear to treat with levity a subject at which he could not look without horror and disgust. But when the most absurd and unreasonable pretences were set up in defence of the most abominable practices, it was impossible not to feel the attempt to impose on one's understanding, as an aggravation of the outrage to one's feelings And when he recollected how often, and how boldly, these arguments of the justice of the trade had in former sessions been forced upon the house, he could not repress the triumph which he felt in seeing them thus laid prostrate and trampled under foot, by those very proceedings upon which the cause of the Slave trade was now exclusively rested.

"Such, then, were the regulations which were to supersede the necessity of any interference on the part of the parliament of Great Britain, for an object which the parliament thinks indispensable, which the assembly by whom these regulations are made neither has nor pretends to have in view, and which these regulations are obviously not calculated in the smallest degree to promote. If, however, the interference of the British parliament were necessary, the house were told it must be ineffectual. The Slave trade would go on, do what they could to put a stop to it. What? Is a trade carried on by British subjects, with

British capitals, in British bottoms, from British ports—not subject to British restrictions and regulations, not to be controlled, or abolished by British acts of parliament? But the trade, if not carried on by British traders, would fall into the hands of foreign nations. Foreign nations, it was well known, had almost entirely abandoned the trade; and that, in fact, Great Britain alone monopolized the gain and the guilt of the traffic in human creatures. Where is the law, or what is the power that can prevent her from washing out so foul a stain upon her commercial character? But the islands, if not supplied by Great Britain, would smuggle for themselves. Had they fleets then? Had they a commercial and a military navy? He would to God they had—for he was persuaded that never could any country attain to the degree of prosperity which such an establishment would argue, without having long, long before it reached that height, disused and abjured the practice of importing annual cargoes of misery and discontent, of outnumbering the civilized population of the country by crowds of savage and injured spirits, watching only the opportunity of rebellion and revenge. Away then with all apprehension of the incompetency of the British parliament to rescue the British name from the disgrace. Could the assembly of Jamaica prohibit the delivery of the cargo at the ports of Jamaica? And could not the parliament of Great Britain forbid its freight in the ships of Great Britain?

"That in all the steps to be taken for the termination of the trade, the co-operation of the colonial assemblies was highly desirable, he frankly avowed: and he would even gladly purchase it at the price of some concession. He would state fairly what he should have considered as a serious manifestation on the part of the colonial assemblies of a desire to do something substantial towards bringing on the termination of the trade. If he had found in the papers upon the table, instead of a professed resolution to resist the termination of the trade; if he had found a law, prohibiting the cultivation of any new land in the island, beyond what was already cultivated, and another law, expressly limiting the amount of the annual importation of negroes to the amount of the annual decrease in their population—he should then have owned that he believed the colonial legislatures to be in earnest. And though he could not bring himself to say, that

so often as the question was put to him, whether or no he would with his own good will allow another slave ship to sail to the coast of Africa; whether he would allow another cargo, another individual human being to be dragged from that country? though he could not say that, to that question so put to him, he could ever answer otherwise than by a flat negative; yet he would own, that had he seen the two regulations which he had mentioned solemnly enacted, and begun to be fairly acted upon by the colonial legislatures, he should very much have wished that question to be suspended, until the efficacy of those two measures towards rendering the continuance of the trade unnecessary had been allowed a trial.

"He wished not to be misunderstood on these points. By allowing no new land to be brought into cultivation by slaves, he did not mean to tie down the planter to the actual spot which he was now working, or to prevent his removing from one estate, which might become effete and worn out, to another, with the same gang of negroes. What he meant to restrict was, the taking an additional quantity of land into cultivation, and thereby creating a new necessity for an increased importation of slaves. With regard to the annual decrease in the population, he had heard it said formerly that it was impossible to ascertain it. But the papers upon the table gave a direct contradiction to that, as they did to most of the other old arguments in favour of the Slave trade: for among other regulations he saw one for this specific purpose, of obtaining a correct account of the annual increase or decrease of slave population upon each estate. A tax was paid too for each slave. What could be ascertained for one purpose was equally to be ascertained for another. Another point was, the compensation to the owners of uncultivated lands, for the advantage which they gave up in restricting themselves from additional cultivation. This compensation, he had no hesitation to say, ought to be liberally adjusted, and cheerfully given. By these two regulations, sincerely adopted, he had little doubt that more would be done than by any other mode that the colonial legislatures could adopt towards making the trade unnecessary: but till these were adopted, all pretence of putting an end to the trade was an attempt to impose upon the understanding of the house. Every additional acre that was brought into cultivation was not the continuance of the

existing Slave trade, but the opening of a new one. Every negro that was imported beyond the population necessary for keeping up the present rate of cultivation was the victim of a trade begun now, under all the aggravation of a pretended conviction of its injustice, and a pretended desire to put an end to it. The discovery of a new island, and the ravage of a hitherto untouched coast, would not be more completely and substantially the beginning of a fresh trade in slaves, the source and fountain of new horrors, and outrages and calamities. Let no man who was not ready to subscribe heartily to these two regulations expect to gain a moment's credit, by his profession, that he wished for the termination of the Slave trade, or by his assertion, that if it were now a question, whether the Slave trade should be, for the first time, established, he would be the man to oppose it.

"He now came to the arguments of some gentlemen who had been chiefly instrumental in introducing into the debate that degree of novelty and variety, which had eminently distinguished this debate from any other that he remembered upon the same subject. Not contented with insisting, in the first place, that the declaration of the assembly of Jamaica, that they had no view to the termination of the Slave trade, was to be accepted as a proof that they had the termination of the Slave trade constantly in their view and near their heart; not contented with contending, that in limiting the age of imported negroes, and adding to the salaries of the clergy of the island, the assembly of Jamaica had done all that human wit could devise, and all that human legislation could enact, towards the accomplishing the purposes of the friends of the abolition; the gentlemen who had contended against the motion had added to these ingenious arguments another and a broader and still bolder one, which, if it be true, leaves very little room to question and very little reason to care, whether either of the other statements be true or false; namely, that for the sake of Africa the Slave trade ought to be continued. And to illustrate and adorn this topic, the hon. gentlemen had availed themselves of all those common places of humanity and philanthropy, all those appeals to the feelings of the house, which have been usually supposed to belong to those who contended on the other side of the question, and upon which they (the friends of the

abolition) had, by these pathetic reasoners themselves, in this very debate, been accused of relying exclusively. He appealed to the house, whether he had not been right in ascribing the character of novelty to a debate, in which all the topics of fine feelings were found forcibly enlisted on the side of the Slave trade. One hon. gentleman (Mr. Petrie), had informed the house, that as a planter he was most anxious for the abolition of the trade, but as a cosmopolite, as a friend of human nature and of the world at large, he must oppose it. 'If you would confer a boon on the West Indies,' said the hon. gentleman, 'abolish the trade; but the West Indians are not so selfish as to desire even so beneficial a boon at the expense of their fellow creatures in Africa; and the heart shudders to conceive what must be the state of Africa without the Slave trade.' Really, if any stranger had come into the house during that part of the debate, he must have conceived that the West Indians had been petitioning to be relieved from the burthen of importing annually vast numbers of dangerous, rebellious, unprincipled barbarians; and that the hon. gentleman, as agent for Africa, was stating to the house, in terms of the utmost pathos, the cruelty of depriving that country of so advantageous an export for its superfluous population. The British parliament must not be so hard-hearted. It must continue the traffic in human beings, the commerce of flesh and blood, out of mere humanity. It was not indeed the first time that the inhabitants of Africa had been the victims of humanity. The first importation of them into the West Indies was traced to a good Spanish bishop, who obtained the title of Friend of the Indians, by proposing to import negroes to relieve the native inhabitants of America from the toil with which their new inmates overwhelmed them. But the hon. gentleman went beyond the Spanish bishop in humanity; the bishop began the Slave trade for the advantage of the native inhabitants of the West Indies; the hon. gengleman would continue it, for the benefit of Africa, even though the present inhabitants of the West Indies were, as he said, averse to its continuance.

"Next to the hon. gentleman, in kind consideration for the unhappy natives of Africa, came an hon. baronet (Sir W. Young), and an hon. gentleman (Mr. Dent), whom he classed

together, because their two arguments, though in some degree contradictory to each other, made (when taken together) a complete defence of the Slave trade system in all its parts. The hon. baronet took upon himself the defence of the system of treatment in the islands: the hon. gentleman, as connected with a slave trading town, had to prove the propriety of the exportation from Africa. And this was the way in which they went about it. 'Slavery,' according to the hon. baronet, 'was taken in a vulgar sense by those who talked in so lamentable a strain upon the subject—the nature of slavery was not correctly understood—there was nothing in reality so afflicting or depressing in it. A state of slavery had produced great men among the ancients. If gentlemen would look into their Macrobius, they would find that half the ancient philosophers had been slaves.' Such was the hon baronet's statement. Mr. Canning professed he was not so much surprised at it, as some gentlemen appeared to be. When he had seen the word 'right' applied in the manner in which it was applied in the Jamaica address in describing a system of oppression, cruelty, and rapine, he had guessed that its companion 'philosophy' would not be far away. Right and philosophy were the two surnames of tyranny and injustice in the vocabulary of French freedom: and the transition from that system of freedom to the system of absolute and abject slavery was no violent or unnatural transition.

"But while the hon. baronet was crying up the philosophy of slavery on the one hand, how did it happen that the hon. gentleman (Mr. Dent) could reconcile his feelings to such a mode of reasoning? The hon. gentleman had found great fault with his hon. friend (Mr. Wilberforce), for having mentioned in his opening speech that there were parts to be found in the interior of Africa where civilization had made such a progress, that books were not uncommon among the inhabitants. 'Books!' exclaimed the hon. gentleman, 'books! the blackamoors have books! and this the hon. mover gives as a reason for not exporting them as slaves! I think if the hon. gentleman had recollected all the mischief that books have done, especially of late years, in the world, he might have spared this argument at least. What produced the French revolution? Books! The house will not be induced to put a stop to the

Slave trade, in order that the inhabitants of Africa might stay at home to be corrupted by reading books.' Now, he must complain of a little unfairness in the arguments of the hon. baronet and the hon. gentleman, thus contrasted with each other. 'Export the natives of Africa,' said the hon. gentleman, 'lest they become literati at home.' 'Bring them away,' said the hon. baronet, 'that they may become philosophers in the West Indies.' He much doubted whether the remedy or the disease were the worst for the patient; but undoubtedly it did seem a little hard that no means could be found to prevent the dangers of African literature, except in the practical philosophy of the West Indies. The hon. baronet had taken fire at an expression in the speech of his hon. friend, who had averred that the regulations for the better treatment of slaves in the islands belonging to Great Britain did not, even in their present improved state, equal the *Code Noire* of the old French government. The hon. baronet felt the utmost indignation that the laws, by which the colonies of a free country were regulated, should be compared with any body of legislation emanating from an absolute monarchy. He might refer to the papers upon the table, to prove that be the *Code Noire* of France as bad as the hon. baronet was desirous it should be thought, the laws in the English West Indies had, at least, been found as susceptible of amendment: he might refer the hon. baronet to the maimings, and mutilations, the scourges, and spiked collars, the use of which was prohibited or regulated by the papers upon the table. But as he really wished to avoid any invidious or harsh topics, he would confine himself to more general observations upon the hon. baronet's way of treating this part of the subject, and he would ask him, whether, in point of fact, he had never found, in the whole extent of his various reading in ancient and modern history, that the colonies of a free country were in general worse regulated and worse administered than those of more absolute governments? That this might be an extraordinary truth, a painful truth, and one which well deserved the examination of the philosopher and the politician, to discover its causes, and remedy the effect, he was not disposed to deny. But that it was a truth, all history showed. If, therefore, his hon. friend had ventured this assertion, without such strong

proof to support it, in the particular instances, as even the papers upon the table would afford, he would have asserted nothing that could call for the sort of indignant reprehension, which the hon. baronet had bestowed upon him; nothing that reflected personally on the gentlemen of the West Indies, nothing that reflected upon the character of this country; but a plain uncontradicted fact, true in general, true in the particular instance, and for which the proceedings now laid before the house furnished ample and indisputable vouchers.

"But the hon. baronet's argument proceeded on still broader grounds. 'Tell not me,' said he, 'of the superiority of the French *Code Noire*, a code framed by a despotic government. It cannot be; it is not in the nature of things that it should be superior, or equal to the laws enacted by the government of a free country. However specious in appearance, there must be some radical defect in the laws enacted by despotism which prevents their beneficial influence.' Was this so? Was the hon. baronet then prepared and contented to argue, that there was something in the nature of the relation between the despot and his slave, which must vitiate and render nugatory and null whatever laws the former might make for the benefit of the latter? which however speciously these laws might be framed, however well adapted they might appear to the evils which they were intended to alleviate, must infallibly be marred and defeated in the execution? Was this the hon. baronet's argument? He thanked him for it. He admitted the truth of it, up to any extent that the hon. baronet pleased. And let the house, let the hon. baronet himself, mark how it bore upon the question before them. The question is, whether in what is to be done towards alleviating and finally extinguishing the horrors of the Slave trade, the proper agent was the British house of commons, or the colonial assemblies? The hon. baronet contended, that the colonial assemblies, and not the British house of commons, were the agents most proper to be employed. But what was the hon. baronet's argument? 'Trust not the masters of slaves in what concerns legislation for slavery! However specious their laws may appear, depend upon it, they must be ineffectual in their application. It is in the nature of things that they should be so. Granted. Let then the British house of commons do their

part themselves! Let them not delegate the trust of doing it to those who, according to the hon. baronet's testimony, cannot execute that trust fairly. Let the evils of the Slave trade be remedied by an assembly of Freemen, by the government of a free people, and not by those whom the hon. baronet represents as utterly unqualified for the undertaking, not by the masters of slaves! Their laws, the hon. baronet had avowed, could never reach, would never cure, the evil. So that, according to the hon. baronet's argument, if there had even been no doubt upon the face of the papers upon the table of the sincere intention of the colonial assemblies to carry the wishes of this country into effect; if there had been no doubt that the termination of the trade was the object to which the regulations (such as they may be) were intended; if there had been no doubt that these regulations were in fact calculated for the purpose; if the assembly of Jamaica had professed as distinctly its anxiety to terminate the trade, as in point of fact it had expressed its resolution to continue it; still, according to the hon. baronet's argument, no trust could be reposed in these appearances and professions. There was something in the nature of absolute authority, in the relation between the master and slave, which made despotism, in all cases, and under all circumstances, an incompetent and unsure executor even of its own provisions in favour of the objects of its power.

"'' But then came the general argument; that it is the interest of the proprietor that his slaves should be well treated, that they should not be overworked, that they should produce a natural population; and that any reasonable man would see a sufficient security in these circumstances against cruelty and oppression in the islands. In the first place, this argument proved too much. For as the interest of the planter, in the preservation and propagation of his slaves, had at all times been the same, it would go to establish that the slaves had at all times been treated as well as possible, with a view to their preservation, to the propagation of their race, and to the consequent discontinuance of importation: suppositions which manifestly were not well founded; else where would have been the necessity, and what would be the benefit of the laws now upon the table of the house, upon the benevolent intention and efficacy of which so much stress

was laid? But in the second place, the argument is perfectly fallacious. It was particularly unpleasant to go at large into this part of the subject, both because it was in its nature liable to be construed as invidious, and because it was not the part of the subject to which the motion of his hon. friend applied; but when points were stated so boldly, as containing incontrovertible truths, as setting all doubt at rest, and making all remedy useless and absurd, it was a little necessary to examine into them. He was not here contesting the fact, that slaves upon our islands were well treated. He was combating the assertion, that from the interest of the proprietors they must of necessity be so. First, then, that man's strongest permanent interests were liable to be overborne by his passions, need hardly be argued at length. Let gentlemen look at the laws upon the table, and see what sort of evils they are intended to remedy. Next, the interest of the proprietor, resident in the island unencumbered with debt, and looking to his estate as a permanent and improving provision for his family, is one thing: but that of the absentee proprietor, who wishes to lay the foundation of a fortune elsewhere—that of the embarrassed proprietor, who wishes to discharge incumbrances—and lastly, that of the overseer, who is anxious to realize a sum of money as quickly as possible to purchase an estate for himself; all these might in the nature of things be interests of a very different kind indeed from that steady and permanent interest, which contenting itself with moderate returns, would insure mild and considerate treatment to the labourers, whose work was to produce them. All these might require increased labour, and rapid produce; all these might, in the nature of things, be less solicitous about the eventual exhaustion of the soil, or of the workers of the soil, than about the extent of present profit. And when the proportion of these classes to that of the resident and unembarrassed proprietors were considered, what became of the general statement, that the interest of the owner must in all cases secure the good treatment of the slaves? That the slaves were in general well-treated he was far from being disposed to deny: he hoped and believed they were so. But that they must be so, from any necessitating and unalterable cause, he could not agree. This, however, after all, was not the question before the house.

However well slaves might be treated, he did not believe there were many persons who were disposed to contend that the importation from Africa was to be continued, merely to furnish objects for colonial benevolence. And he saw nothing therefore in the meliorated treatment of the slaves in the West Indies, that called for the continuance, though much that diminished the necessity of the slave trade.

"There remained only one argument, drawn from the circumstances of the awful times in which we live—an argument of great weight and wisdom in general, but not bearing very happily upon the question in debate. The house were gravely cautioned to beware how, in these times of turbulent innovation, when the old establishments of the world were shaken to their foundations, and many of them tumbling in hideous ruin about our ears; to beware how they laid their unhallowed hands on the ancient institution of the slave trade! Seduced by plausible theories, and seeking after fancied perfection, would they rashly subvert a fabric reared by our ancestors, and consecrated by the lapse of ages? He had already had occasion to say something of the antiquity of the slave trade, in apology for the want of novelty and of variety in the arguments which he might have to bring against it. Those arguments he had admitted could not choose but be old; he had admitted they must necessarily be always the same, because they were founded in what was eternal truth, because they were allied to what was immutable justice, and they partook of the immortality of the one, and of the unchangeableness of the other. But little, indeed, had he expected to hear the remote origin and long duration of the slave trade brought forward with triumph; to hear the advocates of the slave trade put in their claim for the venerableness of age, and the sacredness of prescription. What were the principles upon which we allowed a certain claim to our respect, to belong to any institution which had subsisted from remote time? What was the reason why, when any such institutions had, by the change of circumstances or of manners, become useless, we still tolerated them, nay cherished them with something of affectionate regard, and even when they became burthensome did not remove them without regret? of affectionate regard? What? but because in such institutions for the most

part we saw the shadow of departed worth or usefulness, the monument and memorial of what had, in its origin, or during its vigour, been of service or of credit to mankind? Was this the case with the slave trade? Was the slave trade originally begun upon some principle of public justice, or national honour, which the lapse of time, which the mutations of the world have alone impaired and done away? Has it to plead former merits, services, and glories, in behalf of its present foulness and disgrace? Was its infancy lovely? or its manhood useful? though in its age it is become thus loathsome and perverse? No. Its infant lips were stained with blood. Its whole existence had been a series of rapacity, cruelty, and murder. It rested with the house to decide, whether it will allow to such a life the honours of old age, or endeavour to extend its duration. What were the grounds on which the plea of prescription usually rested? And in what cases was it where any existing order of things, though violent and unjust in its original institution, had by lapse of time been so meliorated and softened down, and reconciled to the feelings of mankind, had so accommodated itself to the manners and prejudices, and interwoven itself with the habits of a country, that the remembrance of its original usurpation was lost in the experience of present harmlessness or utility. Conquest was often of this nature: Violent and unjustifiable in its first introduction, it did often happen, that the conquerors and the conquered became blended into one people, and that a system of common interest arose out of the conciliated differences of parties originally hostile. But was this the case with the slave trade? Was it in its outset only, that it had any thing of violence, of injustice, or of opposition? Were the wounds which Africa felt in the first conflict healed and skinned over? Or were they fresh and green as at the moment when the first slave ship began its ravages upon the coast? Were the oppressors and oppressed so reconciled to each other, that no trace of enmity remained? Or was it in reason, or in common sense, to claim a prescriptive right, not to the fruits of an ancient and forgotten crime, committed long ago, and traceable only in its consequences—but to a series of new violences, to a chain of fresh enormities, to cruelties not continued, but repeated, and of which every individual instance inflicted a fresh calamity, and

constituted a fresh, a separate, and substantive crime? He could not conceive, that in refusing to sanction the continuance of such a system, the house would feel itself, as in the smallest degree, impairing the respect due to the establishments of antiquity, or shaking the foundations of the British constitution. —Mr. Canning concluded, by reminding the house, that the question, however, immediately in dispute, was not, whether the slave trade ought, at some time or other, to be terminated, (for upon that, it was professed loudly, that but one opinion could be entertained), but whether the papers upon the table contained such proofs of disposition on the part of the colonies, to bring about the termination of the slave trade, that the house would, notwithstanding the distinct disclaimer of the assembly of Jamaica, of any such intention on their part, think itself justified in leaving the business wholly in the hands of that assembly, instead of themselves taking the necessary steps for securing the execution of their own purpose."

On the 11th of April, the great question relative to an union with Ireland was again agitated. Mr. Canning spoke, with his usual felicity of illustration, keenness of satire, and powers of reasoning; the latter part of his speech is in his best manner; and as, with the speech already inserted, it will develop the entire views of Mr. Canning in this great national topic, we present it to our readers.

"Confident of the purity of the motives which dictated the proposal of the present measure," Mr. Canning said, "and convinced of its essential importance to the welfare, the salvation of Ireland, it was not a hasty word, an angry or suspicious refusal to consider the merits of the question, that could justify the parliament of this country in throwing up the plan, or abandoning the hopes of that success, which a more mature consideration of the principles of the measure must ensure to it with the whole, and which it had already obtained with a part, of the legislature of the sister kingdom. Strong, however, as his conviction was of the advantages to be derived to Ireland from

the union, and of the absolute necessity of such a measure for securing the connexion of that kingdom with Great Britain, he should be as averse as any man from pressing it upon the Irish parliament, in any manner that should be injurious to its honour or independence. He would not now enter into a detail of the benefits to be expected from the union, nor into a description of the dangers which threatened to impair or to dissolve the connexion of the two countries, unless some efficient remedy were immediately applied to them. These points had already been fully discussed. He should content himself with replying to a few of the arguments respecting the independence of the Irish parliament, which was supposed to be violated by the bare proposal of the union, and which, in the right hon. general's apprehensions, would be absolutely done away by its accomplishment.

"The attack upon the independence of the Irish parliament was stated to be the more unpardonable, as there was no settlement or security to be attained by an union, which could not be equally well provided by an arrangement between the two subsisting and separate parliaments, without trenching upon the free will and independence of either. This argument he had not only heard in that house, but he had read it lately in publications purporting to be copies of speeches delivered from high authority elsewhere, and he had particularly seen it developed in a pamphlet against the union (certainly one of the best written on the side of the question which it espoused) by Mr. Jebb, a gentleman, as he understood, of much talents and respectability. But with this argument he was so far from agreeing, that he could almost be satisfied to rest the whole question on this point singly; and to give up the plan of union altogether, if it did not appear plain that there could be no mode of arrangement devised for the several possible differences and disagreements between the two kingdoms, short of union, which would not take away from the parliament of Ireland even the shadow of independence, and deprive it of all freedom and dignity in the points the most essential to its very being as a parliament.

"What is the point, for instance, the most essential to the character of a house of commons? what is the power and the function, without which it may indeed be a senate, it may be a grave and

respectable council, it may be an assembly of representatives of the people, if you will, but it would cease to be a house of commons according to the genuine spirit of the British constitution?—Is it not the power of the purse; the control preserved over the conduct of the executive ministers of the crown, by the right of giving or withholding the supplies necessary for carrying on the business of the government? Let us see how the exercise of this characteristic and most important right would be secured to the Irish house of commons, by a device, which, it seems, is one of the main expedients proposed as a substitute for an union, a settled scale of proportional contribution. I confess (said Mr. Canning) I should like to see the first meeting of an Irish house of commons, after this ingenious security for its independence had been provided, and to hear the explanation which must be given by some great patriot, who might pique himself upon having invented so saving a substitute, to any country member of parliament who might very reasonably be at a loss to comprehend its operation. Suppose a message from the throne communicating a declaration of war, and supplies to be voted in consequence. The country gentleman, conscious of his duty as a member of the house of commons, and proud of the additional means of discharging it, which he might presume himself to have acquired by the defeat of the union, and the consequent vindication of Irish independence, would very naturally propose to consider of the causes of the war, in order to judge of the propriety of granting supplies. He would be stopped, however, by the patriotic member, who would tell him, 'Sir, your independence does not allow this latitude. The parliament of Great Britain have already voted the supplies. We have nothing to do but to follow them.'—'Good (would the country gentleman answer); let us proceed then to consider the *quantum* of the supplies which we are to raise.'—'You may save yourself that trouble, sir (would be the reply of the great patriot). In the act of last year, entitled 'an Act for Vindicating the Independence of the Irish Parliament,' you will find that we are bound by the vote of the British parliament, not only as to the general question of supplies, but as to the *quantum*, when England votes so much, Ireland is understood to have voted so much:—this was my substitute for the slavish dependence of an

union. This is what we mean by proportional contribution!' —The country gentleman would, perhaps, be somewhat surprised at this explanation, and would inquire, rather anxiously, 'what function then it might be that he was come there to exercise. 'What! (says the patriot)—why, since the establishment of our independence, our business is to devise the means by which the money, already voted for us by the parliament of that country, from whose domination we have so happily rescued ourselves, is to be raised.'—Is this, then, the notable contrivance by which the dignity and effective power of the parliament of Ireland are to be maintained? And is it for a victory over union purchased at this price, that the Irish parliament would crown with laurel the brows of the champions of its independence? And yet, sir, I defy any man to point out to me any other meaning than that which I have ascribed to the phrase 'proportional contribution:' and I equally defy any man to show that there would be in the accomplishment of an union any thing a thousandth part so degrading and destructive to the importance and character and constitution of the house of commons.'

"Look, sir, at other essential rights and powers of a parliament, and see how they can be made to belong to a separate and unconnected parliament in Ireland, or how they can be effectually exercised by it. The right of impeachment, can that be exercised by the parliament of Ireland, against the king's ministers in Great Britain? And yet does any body doubt that the king's British ministers are his proper and constitutional advisers in respect to the affairs of Ireland, as well as to those of the empire at large? The power of altering or limiting the succession of the crown—the crown of Ireland as well as Great Britain—who shall deny that power to the parliament of Great Britain? To ascribe the same power to the parliament of Ireland would be treason. Where, therefore, do there exist, or where can there exist, that perfect equality and independence, which it is imagined the Irish parliament must resign the moment that it ceases to be distinct from that of Great Britain?

"But if this be all that the Irish parliament is to keep and maintain by keeping its separate state, let us next see what it would lose by incorporation with the parliament of Great Britain. Let us see which of its powers or privileges would

be abridged, what salutary and important function it would be disabled from exercising, when it shall be received into the bosom of this parliament, and make part of the general superintending legislature of the empire. To watch over the local and immediate interests of a country, and to preserve its interests, peace, and tranquillity, is one great duty of a parliament: another is, to guard and improve the civil and political rights of the people, and the laws and institutions on which they rest. For which of these functions will the Irish parliament be disqualified, when united with that of Great Britain? Will it be less qualified to adjust and to control the local feuds and animosities arising from religious differences in Ireland, when removed out of the reach of the immediate influence of every sudden and varying gust of popular frenzy? Instead of being committed as a party, it becomes an impartial judge of the conflict, when it is placed in a situation which enables it to weigh every claim with dispassionate calmness and dignity, to resist what may be extravagant without the appearance of enmity, and concede to the catholics what may remain to be conceded without the appearance of intimidation, and without hazard to its own authority and power. If we consider the various other objects of legislation, in matters of commerce, of civil liberty, and of political constitution, will the people of Ireland feel their interests less safe, their rights and privileges less guarded, when those whose duty it is to watch over them shall sit among the guardians of the British constitution, and when no law shall be passed affecting the condition of an Irishman, which does not include in its operation millions of his fellow-subjects in Great Britain?

"There is yet another province of a parliament, in which it acts not directly from itself, but by advice and control over the executive servants of the crown—the regulation of the concerns of a country in its relations with foreign countries whether at peace or war. In this province what will the parliament of Ireland lose by its incorporation with the parliament of this kingdom? What will it lose? is it not obvious that the question answers itself; that it can lose nothing; but that it will gain all?—Mark, then, the result of this examination of the powers and duties of a parliament. And if it be true that every

attempt to secure the connexion of the two countries against the possibilities of difference between two separate parliaments is either utterly nugatory, or must reduce to a mere mockery in one of them the very independence which it is intended to preserve; if it be true, that by the incorporation of the two parliaments, while the empire in general is augmented in resources, in strength, and solidity, the parliament of Ireland gains additional power in all its functions, and, in some cases, acquires functions altogether new: if this be so, and if the connexion of the two countries be worth preserving, and if the dangers which threaten it be such, that an effort must be made for its preservation; can we hesitate to make that effort, while it is yet in our power? or shall we suffer ourselves to be driven from the only measure which promises to be adequate to the emergency, by the poor, unreasoning, unsupported paradox, that the separation of the legislatures alone can insure unity of will?—keep the parliaments distinct, and their interests and inclinations must be invariably the same; identify them, and you immediately create separate interests and discordant inclinations.

"Though he should not detain the house by arguing what unfortunately was but too notorious to require argument or proof at this moment, the extent and nature of the calamities, which had distracted and desolated Ireland, and which rendered some great effort absolutely indispensable to save that kingdom to itself and to the empire—he could not pass over wholly without notice the assertion of the hon. baronet, that his right hon. friend was to be considered as the sole and wilful author of all those calamities; that he alone had kindled the frightful and unnatural rebellion, which had raged throughout that kingdom; he alone had armed the frenzied populace against the government, against the laws, against civil order, and the rights of humanity; and all for the express purpose of getting Ireland more completely into his power: and that with this view he now brought forward the union, the pretended cure for the evils which he had himself created. This charge was as extraordinary in itself as it was curious from the reasoning by which it was supported. As to the fact, to whom the rebellion was to be attributed, he should have no great difficulty in setting the hon. baronet right; but the house, he could plainly

see, anticipated him in all that he could say upon that subject. But let the house observe how the accusation stood against his right hon. friend;—and how the gentlemen on the opposite side of the house, in their laudable anxiety to heap upon his right hon. friend every crime, and to impute to him every ill motive of which human nature was capable, did at length so contradict and perplex their own arguments, that to prove him guilty of all that was ascribed to him, they must prove him to be wanting not in common humanity only and common honesty, but in common sense; a monster not of wickedness only, but of absurdity. Throughout the debates of last session, the kingdom of Ireland had been described by those gentlemen as the theatre on which his right hon. friend acted all the bloody scenes, wherein his heart delighted; where he gave a loose to his tyrannical disposition, and revelled in iniquity without question or control. In this country, it was said, there was something like a parliament to check him in his career—but there no eye watched, no hand restrained him—the parliament of that country was no otherwise efficient than to aid his excesses in the first instance, and afterwards to cover them from inquiry, it was at once the instrument and the screen of his oppressions. Well, but if all this was so—what became of the charge which had been made to-night?—If Ireland was already so completely his own, what need to foment a rebellion to make it more so? If the Irish parliament was so entirely subservient to his wicked purposes, what need to get rid of it? why should he throw away his instrument, and throw down his screen? If this were so, he must be the stupidest of tyrants, the most blundering of cut-throats, an assassin so poor in contrivance as to strip himself at once of his dagger and his cloak. He entreated the house to consider whether this was likely to be a true character of his right hon. friend: he did not mean to contend for his moral character;—he admitted him blood-thirsty, and, by nature, cruel, if they pleased; but was he likely to mix so much folly with his malignity? was he likely to be so ignorant, so perverse, so ill-managing, so absolutely directorial in his tyrannous usurpation, as this charge represented him to be?

"But from probabilities the gentlemen on the other side of the house had come to facts. His right hon. friend did create

the rebellion in Ireland—for he recalled Lord Fitzwilliam, and the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam produced the rebellion according to them. Undoubtedly, he did recall Lord Fitzwilliam. Fortunately the world was not now in ignorance as to the causes of that recall. Lord Fitzwilliam was sent to Ireland with instructions not to bring forward the catholic question, nor to allow it to be brought forward at that time, if he could prevent it. The catholic question was brought forward:—and Lord Fitzwilliam was recalled. Undoubtedly, too, there were those who, at the time of that transaction, predicted all sorts of evils to Ireland from the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam. Many evils had, in truth, happened since; but nevertheless he was not inclined to allow that the prediction was fulfilled. He was far from meaning any thing disrespectful either to the worthy and enlightened nobleman whose name was thus brought in question, or to his friends. But when other causes of such dreadful efficacy were manifestly operating in Ireland precisely as they had operated in other parts of Europe, he could not compliment so outrageously and so unseasonably, as to ascribe the distractions of that country to any thing personal to an individual, however highly he might respect him. He could not read the confessions of those self-convicted traitors, who had, as it were, with their own hands, administered the poisoned chalice to their country, he could not read their confession that French principles and French intrigue were the ingredients of that infectious draught, and yet continue to consider the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam as the only cause of the malady by which Ireland had been convulsed and almost destroyed.

"With regard to the predictions which were referred to on this subject, they reminded him of a prediction once very successfully employed by another great viceroy; a man with whom it would be no disparagement to the talents and political sagacity of the respectable nobleman in question to be compared—he meant Columbus. Columbus, as every body must remember to have read, when the people of Hispaniola, growing weary of their new guests, resolved to drive them away from their coast, and with that view refused to furnish them with any more provisions—Columbus addressed himself to the chiefs, and with an unusual solemnity of tone and deportment, informed them,

that on a certain day the heavens should be overcast;—the sun should hide his head; and then, in the darkness that would cover their land, they should acknowledge the anger of the offended deity, whose minister and messenger he was. It could hardly be necessary to inform the house, that Columbus was enabled, by the aid of his pocket almanack, to foretel an eclipse, of which the Indians, not being provided with any similar almanack, were wholly unapprized. And it could scarcely be necessary to add, that upon the eclipse taking place, as Columbus had foretold it, the Indians, convinced of his more than mortal power, hastened to make their peace with him, and to offer every atonement for their former impiety. Now, sir, (said Mr. Canning,) I conceive that it required not much more knowledge of moral than Columbus possessed of physical causes, to discover in the situation of Ireland, in the distribution of the different classes of society, in the state and temper of the lower orders of the people, materials, which, if a spark from the dreadful conflagration of the French revolution should fall upon them, would presently burst into explosion: for the sagacity which enabled them to foresee and foretell this, I give those who did foretell it full credit. But as to the connexion of this event with the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, I confess I believe that Lord Fitzwilliam's recall was not more immediately the occasion of the rebellion, than the displeasure of Columbus was the cause of the eclipse.

"But then, sir, be the causes which have led to the present situation of things in Ireland what they may, there is another origin assigned by gentlemen on the opposite side of the house for this frantic measure of an union. It originates, we are told, from the intoxication of power, the wildness and wantonness of uncontrolled authority in my right hon. friend; a power and authority which no minister before him ever possessed, and which, it seems, is an object of peculiar and watchful jealousy to such of those gentlemen as have not yet wholly abandoned their parliamentary duty. Sir, how far the power which my right hon. friend is supposed to possess may exceed that of former ministers, I shall not inquire: but that the degree of power possessed by a minister in this country, grounded as it

must be on the confidence of parliament and of the people, growing only with that confidence, and ceasing with it, is in all cases to be considered as matter of suspicion and of danger, I cannot allow. It is not for the degree of his power, but for the use which he may make of it, that a minister is arraignable before the bar of that public opinion which, in fact, confers, and which most effectually controls its exercise. But if a minister does find himself, from the enlarged confidence of the country, or from the peculiar conjuncture of the times, in possession of a greater sway and authority than has belonged to ordinary governments at ordinary times, such a minister is, indeed, bound to consider himself as placed in a most high and solemn trust; to consider what has been intrusted to him, not as a good to be enjoyed, but as a duty to be performed. He ought to take good heed, that if his power exceeds and abounds beyond what is necessary for carrying on the every-day business of the country, that excess and that abundance does not run to waste. For the use of the ordinary power which belongs to his situation, he is answerable to the sovereign who employs, to the parliament who trusts him, and to his contemporaries, whose interests are committed to his care; for the use of the surplus beyond what the ordinary administration of affairs requires, he owes, and if he be worthy of his character and high station, he will feel a responsibility no less binding;—he owes it first to his own conscience, and then, not to his own age only, but to parliaments of future times, and to generations of men yet unborn.—If we look to the history of Ireland, sir, perhaps we might find that no small part of the unsettled and comparatively unimproved state of the country might be traced to the want of some more steady and effective power in the governments which have succeeded each other in that kingdom: each of which, from the shortness of its duration, and from the necessity (consequent upon frequent change) of employing the whole of its influence and authority to secure support to its measures during its own temporary existence,—has been strong, indeed, for that purpose, strong for the ordinary administration of the affairs of the day, but wholly inadequate to the entertainment of larger views, to the founding of more comprehensive systems, for remote improvements, and

for permanent advantage to the country. And this, sir, I conceive to be one of the main evils which the union is calculated to remedy.

"If we look to the history of this country, what is it that most marks and distinguishes the last eighty years, the period which has elapsed since the happy establishment of the present family upon the throne, from almost any other period in the history of any nation of the world? It is, perhaps, that during a period the most flourishing and the most happy with which any nation ever was blessed, in which the civil and political rights of the subject have been better understood and more uninterruptedly enjoyed, in which the government has been more powerful and respected abroad, foreign commerce more abundant, peaceful industry more effectually protected, and private wealth and comfort more generally diffused throughout the country, than at any the proudest period that the mightiest empires of the ancient or modern world can boast: there is yet less proof left to posterity of the wisdom or splendour of that period—there is less of public institution, of permanent establishment, which dates its origin within that period—there appears to have been less done for posterity during that period—than in many periods of the history of many nations, which could by no means vie with it in happiness or in glory. Is it because there has been a dearth of great talents, or eminent qualities, in the statesmen that flourished during those years? Certainly not. Some of the names which grace these annals might be enrolled with the greatest names of any age, or any country of the world. I would venture therefore to ascribe this particularity to the constant struggle for political power, to the conflict and balance of parties, which prevailed almost universally during the whole of that time. If any person were to dispute this theory, they would naturally quote the long administration of Sir Robert Walpole as an instance of pretty secure preponderance, and of power sufficiently established to have enabled him to attempt and carry into effect any plans of lasting utility. But how stands the fact upon this subject? Twice only does that minister appear to have carried his views beyond his own time, and to have felt an ambition to establish institutions that should connect his name with advantages to be enjoyed by posterity: and in both

these instances he was foiled—I allude, sir, to the sinking fund, which he had at one time been proud to consider as the lasting monument of his fame, but of which, with his own hands, he began to undermine the foundation: and to the well-known excise scheme, of the benefits of which he to the last declared himself firmly and immoveably convinced, but which was overborne by the popular clamour excited against it by his political antagonists. That he was sincere in his endeavours to carry the latter measure, and that he was most reluctantly forced to abandon it, cannot be doubted; and with regard to the sinking fund, though he was not driven to the violation of it by a parliamentary opposition, yet his defence of himself for so weak and impolitic a resource was grounded on his apprehension of the opposition which would have been directed against any other method of raising the supplies of the year. After his failure in these two instances, Sir Robert Walpole contented himself with applying whatever power he possessed to the carrying on, as smoothly as he could, the ordinary business of the country. I am not praising or blaming Sir Robert Walpole for his conduct, either in these instances, or in general; I am merely stating the facts. And I would ask, what is the inference to be drawn from them? If it be excusable in a minister who has, or fancies himself to have, barely sufficient power to maintain himself in his station, to rest satisfied with doing the duty of the day, and leaving the country exactly where he found it, does it follow, that it is matter of accusation and criminal charge, or matter of sober and founded suspicion and jealousy against another minister, whom other times and other circumstances may have furnished with more extensive power, that his views for the good of his country expand in proportion to his capacity for serving it; that he looks beyond the routine of his official duty, beyond the momentary necessities of the day in which he lives; and that he lays the foundations of a fabric which may endure for ages, and which may afford to united nations a lasting shelter and security?

"I beg pardon of the house, sir, for having suffered myself to be led into a discussion of this nature, and for having detained them so much longer than when I rose I had any intention of trespassing upon their attention. I have but one word more to

say. We are cautioned that no union but that of affection can be lasting or advantageous. Sir, I know it. And to argue whether or not the union now proposed will be such an union, is to argue the whole question of the probable advantages that will result from it. For do not let us be led to imagine, that the Irish, however spirited and quick in feeling, are creatures of passion only; that they are not capable of appreciating real benefits, or of being convinced by a fair appeal to their understanding. Such an appeal it is the business of this address to secure. If the union shall be found upon examination to offer solid and permanent advantages to that country, let us not be apprehensive that the proposal of it by Great Britain can long be construed into insult or unkindness. Fear not, sir: if from this root shall spring and thrive the peace, the prosperity, the happiness of Ireland, the affections of the Irish people will grow and flourish with them: they will be engrafted on the same stock, and confirmed with the same strength: 'Crescent illæ, crescetis amores!' In the confidence that this will be the case, I discharge by my vote for the address this night what I feel to be a divided duty. As a member of the British parliament, I give my hearty concurrence to a measure, which will consolidate and augment the strength and resources of the empire: but as connected with Ireland by many ties of blood and of affection, I contend still more anxiously for what I conceive to be involved in the issue of this question, the safety and future prosperity of Ireland."

Thus terminated Mr. Canning's public exertions for the year 1799. It was in this year that an event took place, in the highest degree important to his station in society, to his private character, and domestic comfort. This was his marriage with Miss Joan Scott, one of the daughters and co-heiresses of general Scott, whose immense fortune had been made by play. Miss Scott's two sisters were married, one to Lord Downe, and the other to the Marquis of Tichfield, now Duke

of Portland. This connexion powerfully strengthened and increased Mr. Canning's parliamentary interests, furnished him with a respectable independence, as to fortune, and opened a field for the developement of those social and endearing virtues, for which he was universally respected and beloved. It is said by those, who knew him best, that no man ever discharged the relative duties of life with a more graceful propriety. But of this more anon.

In 1800, we find Mr. Canning discussing in parliament the overture of peace from the consular government of France, the Habeas Corpus Suspension Bill, Bull-baiting, Subsidies to the Emperor of Germany, and the State of the Nation.

We record, with no satisfaction, his sentiments on the savage custom of bull-baiting. Brutal amusements brutalize a people. The courage that is inspired by animals lacerating and destroying each other is of the very worst kind. It is ferocity, and when stimulated by such scenes, and combined with the moral habits, which are cultiv ted and exhibited by those who are usually found to delight in them, it is likely to expend itself in ruffianly assassinations and diabolical atrocities. The soldier, who receives his education at a bull-baiting, will be nothing more than a wild beast of prey, when employed to sack a vanquished town, or to pursue a flying enemy.

The speech on the habeas corpus suspension bill contains nothing new or remarkable. But those on the overture of peace, on subsidizing the emperor, and on the state of the nation, are highly valuable, as they forcibly depict the character of Buonaparte and the spirit

of the French government. As far as they relate to these topics we will insert the most striking parts of them in their order.

"But this distrust of the new government the hon. gentleman professed to believe to be in a great measure effected; and to be put forward only in order to afford an opportunity for declaring the marked and exclusive predilection of ministers for the ancient monarchy of France; and nothing could, in the hon. gentleman's opinion, be more impolitic, as well as more outrageously insulting to the feelings of the people of France, than the avowal of a desire to see the ancient monarchy restored. Undoubtedly such a desire was plainly and distinctly avowed; and, for his part (Mr. Canning said), he was at a loss to conceive what there was in the avowal that could irritate the feelings of Frenchmen. If, indeed, it was possible to imagine, that there still existed in France a large body of sincere, bigoted, fanatical lovers of republicanism, of persons who gravely believed in the purity and perfection of the republican principle, as applicable, or as ever having been applied to the government of France, under any of its successive revolutions, who still looked with faith and hope to the preservation and propagation of their principles, and considered nothing but the return of monarchy as likely to oppose their progress, or diminish their influence and operation, if such a race of madmen yet were to be found, whose eyes and understandings the whole series of tyrannies from Robespierre and Buonaparte had not been sufficient to open; with them, he must confess that the expression of a wish for the restoration of the old legitimate government might be unpopular; their feelings such a proposition might irritate. But, he confessed, he could not easily persuade himself that such a race of men could be very numerous either in France or elsewhere. And if, as was more probable, the general and prevailing feeling throughout France was that of weariness and disgust at the scenes of horror and calamity through which they had passed; if they now began to see, with regret and compunction, that, after ten years of sufferings and of crimes, of miseries inflicted upon others, and heaped upon themselves, after wading through seas of blood in pursuit of the empty form

of liberty, which still eluded their grasp, the sole result of their endeavours to shake off the government, which they were once taught to think so oppressive, had been no other than the subjecting themselves to a tyranny ten thousand times more galling; that they had succeeded only in exchanging the sceptre for the sword; that, instead of eradicating monarchy, they had stripped it of all that made it venerable, and of all that made it useful, of all that recommended it in theory, and all that softened it in practice; had stripped it of its stability, its legitimacy, and its limitations. If such were now the reflections of all thinking men in that unhappy country, what reason was there to apprehend that they would shrink from the mention of their ancient government? That they would withhold their homage from a known and mitigated monarchy, to pay it to a frightful and jealous usurpation? That they would hold sacred their allegiance to a shapeless mockery of royalty, with 'the likeness of a kingly crown' upon its head, and refuse it to that substantial and protective power, under which they have flourished for ages, in respect abroad and in happiness at home? Was it not rather to be presumed, that they had now began to look with anxious desire for a termination to their calamities, in such an order of things as alone could terminate them in peace and security? Was it not probable—was it not certain—did not every man, who heard him, know from his own experience, that the first idea suggested by Buonaparte's successful usurpation, was, that it was a step to the restoration of monarchy? Was it not obvious to every person, that from the government of one man, to that of a lawful king, was a transition neither so strange nor so difficult, as from any of the more complicated constitutions, which had risen and fallen in France since the abolition of the monarchy? And, even now, though to point out the pacific stages by which the change was to be brought about might be by no means easy, was there any human being, who did not feel that monarchy was brought more within view than it had been at any period since the beginning of the revolution? That those who wished it felt it more confident in their hopes; that those who dreaded its return yet thought it more probable, and might be more ready to compromise with it; and that, therefore, to put the case of the re-es-

tablishment of monarchy, as that in which peace would become easy and certain, was to specify not only the most desirable but the most probable termination of the war, and that which, according to all human calculation, might be most near at hand.

"But an apprehension was expressed, that in stating the desire of this government for the restoration of monarchy in France, a pledge was given to the royalists that peace should never be made at all, until monarchy was restored. It was feared, that government were thus making common cause with the royalists, and implicating the fortunes of this country in the issue of a contest, in which substantially it had no real concern. Not so: the language of the official note was guarded carefully in this point; and so little did it justify the conclusion, that common cause was made with the royalists to the extent described, that in other comments upon the note, which he had seen, a directly contrary effect was stated as likely to be produced by it; namely, that the intimation of other possible cases, in which peace might be made by this country with France, would prevent the royalist party from building any hope at all upon the good wishes of Great Britain. The truth, however, lay between both; and it might, perhaps, be sufficient to answer to both objections, that the royalists were not deceived as to what was the true intention of government, and that they were satisfied with it. The royalists of France, and the government of this country, had undoubtedly a common object, but they had different degrees of interest in the attainment of it, and proportioned to those different degrees of interest might be the degrees of their respective exertions and perseverance in the pursuit. So far, however, as they were both to proceed, they might safely and beneficially proceed together. It was a partnership, in which the royalists had necessarily embarked their whole fortune; this country, a part only; and the terms of the connexion resulting from these combined, but unequal interests, were distinctly understood. If we could bring the royalists through by the same efforts by which we were working for our own advantage, surely it was highly useful, and honourable, and humane, to do so: but we were not pledged to persevere beyond what we thought prudent on our own account; we might withdraw at any time, when our own objects were accomplished, or when we saw, or thought we saw, that they were

unattainable, without greater risk than it appeared to us advisable to incur: and we might withdraw without reproach and without dishonesty. We had no share in bringing the royalists into the contest, though finding them at our side, we were bound in honour and humanity to assist them, as far as our ways lay together: but while we owed thus much to them, we did not, nor did they, forget that we owed all to ourselves.

"Next, however, according to the hon. gentleman's arguments, it was to be considered that this country had, in fact, no interest whatever in the re-establishment of monarchy in France: nay, that it was rather an event to be looked at with jealousy and apprehension. This assertion, though he had heard of its being made and maintained in other places (Mr. Canning said), he could hardly believe to be made with seriousness. Good God! Had Great Britain, had the world no interest in the re-establishment of order, of a known, defined, understood, experienced, legitimate order of things, in the room of a system of disorder, anarchy, and impiety, not more afflicting to France, than it was incompatible, as had been proved by long and painful experience, with the security of every other government upon earth? Was it nothing to this country, looking to peace as its object, whether she should be able to conclude a peace on which she could rely, and under which she could repose with confidence; a peace which should bring with it the renewal of safe communication, of commercial intercourse, of reciprocal trust and benefit; or, whether she should only rest on her arms in hourly expectation of being again summoned to war, in defence of her dearest interests? And did the honourable gentleman suppose, that such a peace as was alone worth having, as alone could be maintained without all the cost, and more than all the dangers of war, could rest on any other grounds than the restoration of such an order of things in France, as might ensure the return of credit and stability to the government, and of security for property and of honest industry, and commercial morality amongst the people?

"The expression, therefore, of an anxious wish for the re-establishment of the French monarchy, did not appear to him to be either so dangerous in the effect that it might produce in France, nor so extravagant with respect to the interest of Great

Britain. But here the hon. gentleman had taken a very extraordinary ground indeed: and in his zeal to combat the idea of restoring monarchy, he had far outstepped the rule of forbearance, with respect to the past conduct of France, which he had prescribed for those who differed from him upon the question, and had gone into a laboured dissertation on the dangers with which monarchy, in the House of Bourbon, had in old times threatened this country and all Europe. The mind of that man must be singularly constituted, who, living in such times as the present, could overlook all the dangers actually impending, and all those which had recently overwhelmed the world from the profligate aggressions and tyranny of republican France; and who yet trembled with apprehension at the recollection of the ambitious projects of Louis XIV. The hon. gentleman had referred to the projects of that monarch, which had threatened the independence of Europe, a hundred years ago; and has spoken of them in a tone which showed, that he thought the independence of Europe matter of concern, and the overweening ambition of France matter of dread to this country: and he had spoken, in the manner which it deserved, of the stand made by King William in defence of the liberties of this country, and of Europe. He agreed with the hon. gentleman, in looking back with pride to that distinguished period of English history. He found in that period much to praise; wisdom and firmness in our councils, skill in our generals, valour in our armies: but he found nothing that delighted him more, or that he would rather recommend to the admiration of the hon. gentleman, and his friends, than the cordial support afforded by the commons of Great Britain to their sovereign, in the prosecution of a war, carried on for the true interests, the honour and safety of their country, against the rapacious, insolent, and domineering ambition of France. [Mr. Canning here read an address of the house of commons to King William, in the year 1696, the 8th year of the war, containing expressions of their determination to support his majesty to the utmost, 'till he should be able to obtain by war a safe and honourable peace.'] This example was, indeed (he said), worthy of being quoted, and worthy of all the praise bestowed upon the exertions of that reign, by

the hon. gentleman. But, after all, what did the hon. gentleman gain to his argument, by referring to the days of Louis XIV., and by citing the precedent of the noble struggle maintained by this country, during the reign of King William and his successor, against France? He reminded us, it was true, what were the efforts, and what were the sacrifices, which the people of England had thought themselves bound to make in that contest. What was the inference? Why, that in a contest, incalculably more arduous, and involving in its issue interests infinitely more important, we should make, at least, equal efforts, and display, at least, equal perseverance. What was at any time the specific danger from the ambition of Louis XIV., that called forth all the energy of this country? First, generally, his unprincipled ambition; latterly, war was carried on against him because there was a danger that France would acquire an influence in the councils of Spain. An influence in the councils of Spain! Would to God such were the only danger that we had now to apprehend! Yet for this, the hon. gentleman thought war was justly and nobly caaried on! And now—Oh! now, there was no reason, no pretext for carrying on war at all; no danger now of French influence in Spain!—France intermeddle in the concerns of Spain now! France command the treasures, dispose of the fleets, direct the policy of the Spanish monarchy now! Not she; she did not presume to entertain projects so ambitious. Spain indeed! She had nothing to do with Spain; nor with Holland; nor with the Netherlands; nor with Switzerland; nor with Germany; nor with Italy (with Italy, God be thanked! not much); nor with Egypt. There was nothing now to fear from her power; nothing now to suspect from her intrigues; no danger to the balance of Europe; no hazard to the liberties, the religion, the constitutions of the several states and kingdoms of the world!

"If, however, there were no reason for carrying on the war, it was not, therefore, the less necessary to inquire what possibility there was of making, and what chance for securing peace. And this was a question which, unfortunately, could not be agitated, without touching upon the second topic, which the hon. gentleman had prohibited, the personal character and conduct of

the first consul of the French republic. On what ground, indeed, the hon. gentleman had thought himself warranted in precluding such a discussion, it was not easy to conceive. The discussion was not of our seeking. The first consul voluntarily forced himself upon our observation, in a way that made it impossible for us to turn aside, and to pretend not to see him. He told us plainly, that if we had to do with France at all, we must have to do with *him*, as concentering in his own person all that was stable, all that was authoritative, all that was responsible to foreign countries, in the new government of France. 'If there be power in France, it is in *me*; if there be faith in France, in *me* must you look for it; if you make peace with France, *my* word, *my* character, *my* personal dispositions must be your sole and sufficient security.' Such was the language of the first consul to his majesty and his government; and when, in compliance with such an invitation, it was proposed to examine the foundation and validity of the only security thus offered to us, the hon. gentleman stepped in and told the house, that such an examination was highly indecorous and unnecessary. It might give offence, it seemed, to the first consul; it was personal and indelicate; and he knew not what other terms of fine feeling were applied to it. Now, first, as to the fear of giving offence to the first consul himself, or to France: the hon. gentleman appeared to have very ill understood to what degree the temper of France was captious and irritable, in respect to the character of its existing, or expired governments: otherwise the hon. gentleman, with that delicacy which he professed to wish to observe, and that fear of offending, which dictated his warning to that side of the house, would not have indulged himself in many parts of the speech which he had made that day. For did the hon. gentleman imagine, that it was to their government of the present hour, or to that which Buonaparte had destroyed to erect this, or to that upon the ruins of which he had erected that which he had now destroyed, or to any one of the nine or ten immediately preceding governments, that France limited the privilege and sacredness, which made it almost blasphemy to condemn their proceedings? No such thing; the hon. gentleman himself, in reviling the ambition of the ancient government of France, had as much sinned against

the majesty of the French nation, as if he had presumed to traduce Brissot, or Robespierre, or any of the latter tyrants, who swept them to the scaffold, and were swept by their successors to the same scaffold in their turn. The hon. gentleman has, indeed, committed his country most rashly, by such intemperate language against Louis XIV. Does he not know, or had he forgotten at the moment, that Rome was sacked and pillaged the other day, to avenge the manes of Vercengetorix (or some such name), a king of the Gauls, who flourished some time before Louis XIV., and whom Julius Cæsar was discovered to have aggrieved in a scandalous manner; and that to reclaim the trophies won from the Burgundians, was one of the pretexts alleged for the invasion of Switzerland? Let not, therefore, the hon. gentleman imagine, that the lapse of near a century, since the time of Louis XIV., would bar France, in her own good time, from avenging the wrongs done to his memory. France is not so forgetful, *nullum tempus occurrit.* Her vengeance might sleep, indeed; but opportunity would awaken it, and could we be caught as fairly off our guard, as weak and as inviting as Rome or as Switzerland (which might readily be the case if we would accept the counsel of the hon. gentleman opposite, and make peace, or armistice, without examination or delay), the hon. gentleman's abuse of Louis XIV. would be as good a plea as any other, for declaring war against us, and pursuing it to our ruin.

"Forced, however, as we were, at all hazards, to sift pretty narrowly the character and conduct of the present ruler of France, it was some satisfaction that we had before-hand so much of what was the only testimony to be relied on, that of 'experience and the evidence of facts,' to guide our judgment, and aid our decision upon the subject. Mr. Canning said, he would not follow his right hon. friend through the detail of Buonaparte's conduct with regard to foreign states, in every transaction in which he had been engaged, from his first appearance at the head of the army of Italy, to his late disgraceful flight from the army of Egypt. The facts were before the house; they were fresh in every body's recollection. To these facts what testimony was opposed? first, the declaration of Buonaparte himself, swearing by himself, no doubt, as was the

custom and the right of so transcendent a personage; and secondly, his minister, M. Talleyrand. Talleyrand, to be sure, was an admirable witness to character in matter of negociation. Talleyrand certainly had proved, that he knew well how to make a treaty; but he seemed to be quite lost in admiration of Buonaparte's talents for keeping one. This was a thing of which he had no idea. 'The old Directory and I,' said Talleyrand, 'know pretty well how to set about concluding a treaty; there was the American treaty, which all the world knows; the Portugal treaty too; both were managed cleverly enough in the making; but as to the keeping them, that is quite another thing. There, indeed, we had no skill, nor talent; but here, here is a man, who keeps treaties as well as makes them; a perfect phænomenon in the diplomacy of France.' Such was the testimony that Talleyrand could furnish on behalf of Buonaparte. For that which Buonaparte could give in favour of himself, it fortunately was not necessary to rest on conjecture or inference. Fortunately the chance of war had thrown into our hands documents, of which the authenticity could not be questioned, and in which the characters of fraud, perjury, treachery, and deliberate breach of faith, were written in Buonaparte's own hand against himself. He alluded to the letters lately intercepted on their passage from Egypt.

"But in defiance of the proofs arising out of Buonaparte's own testimony, thus fortunately produced against himself, and in contradiction to all that had been stated by his right hon. friend, the hon gentleman thought it sufficient to maintain that Buonaparte had not in point of fact violated the treaty of Campo Formio. Undoubtedly, the hon. gentleman was right. Buonaparte did not violate the treaty of Campo Formio. But what then? What ground for triumph did the hon. gentleman find in this concession? The hon. gentleman must have mistaken his right hon. friend's meaning, if he supposed that the whole of his argument was liable to be overthrown by the production of a single instance of a treaty not broken by Buonaparte. If, indeed, his right hon. friend had asserted that France had never broken a treaty without Buonaparte; if the tenor of his argument had been that Buonaparte was a necessary ingredient in every breach of treaty; then, to be sure, to find one which had

been broken by France without his agency might be matter of high controversial triumph. But his right hon. friend had asserted no such thing. He had merely asserted that Buonaparte had never kept a treaty on his part; and that France on hers had left none unviolated; but that she had employed Buonaparte to violate them all, that she had been so poor in resources as to be able to find but one instrument for such complicated and multiplied acts of wickedness, it had never entered into his right hon. friend's head to assert.—He was, however, very glad that the hon. gentleman had recalled the attention of the house to the treaty of Campo Formio; because, though not affording an instance of breach of treaty on the part of Buonaparte, it was much more material to be considered as affording the instance to which Buonaparte himself referred with so much confidence, of the dispositions already manifested by him, not for peace simply, but for a general pacification. The first consul, in his letter to his majesty, had declared, that his majesty 'could only see in this overture his personal desire to contribute, for the second time, to a general pacification.' Talleyrand, in his reply to Lord Grenville's note, had insisted upon the same topic, and the hon. gentleman on the other side, who took all that Buonaparte and Talleyrand said for gospel, had not been slow in expressing his persuasion, that it was for a general pacification that treaty was now proposed. Now, when a man talked of doing a thing for the *second* time, he luckily gave some clue for finding his real meaning; for as much as to form some idea how he would do it in the *second* time, it was only necessary to look back, and see how he had done it in the *first*. In this point of view the treaty of Campo Formio did indeed afford an admirable test of Buonaparte's notions of general pacification. At the time when the treaty of Campo Formio was negociated, the powers still at war with France, besides Austria, were Great Britain, and as the ally of Great Britain, Portugal. The preliminaries of Leoben were signed by Buonaparte, in April, 1797. The treaty of Campo Formio, founded on these preliminaries (he would not here distract the attention of the house by noticing the wide departure in the treaty from the preliminaries signed at Leoben, nor by remarking on the plea by which that departure was defended on the part of France,

namely, that in framing those preliminaries, advantage had been taken of the generosity of the French republic—these were shades of faithlessness scarce worth mentioning), the treaty of Campo Formio was concluded in the course of the summer. In the same summer Great Britain proposed to treat for peace; and the conferences at Lisle were opened. Portugal also, besides that she was included in the proposals of Great Britain, opened a separate treaty for herself. What then was the consequence? Peace made with Austria, England, and Portugal, the only remaining powers at war, actually engaged in negociation;—one should have imagined that the work of general pacification would have gone smoothly on; and that Buonaparte, whose interest was paramount in France at that moment, might easily have obtained his heart's desire. But no—the revolution of the 4th of September took place;—a revolution which, be it remarked, could not be brought about without the consent of Buonaparte, which Barras, then the intimate friend and patron of Buonaparte, planned, which Augereau was sent from Buonaparte's army to Paris to conduct, and therewith ended the negociations at Lisle, and the treaty with Portugal; the British minister was dismissed, the Portuguese minister imprisoned;—and threats of renewed and interminable war were the only answers made to the persevering offers of new negociation on the part of this country. Such was the conduct and success of Buonaparte's first attempt at general pacification; and lest any doubt should be entertained of his perfect satisfaction in the issue, he shortly after pursued his favourite plan of peace, by conducting an army, destined against the British possessions in the East, into Egypt, the territory of a partial and friendly power; and thus both secured the continuance of the war with England, and wantonly added a new enemy to the list of the enemies of France.

"If such was the state of the transaction to which we were so confidently referred, as containing undoubted proofs of the dispositions avowed by the first consul, and as affording the precedent which he meant to follow in the negociation now proposed to us—whatever advantage we might have to accuse ourselves of having lost by refusing to listen to his overtures, was it reasonable to suppose, that of all things in the world, we had

thrown away an opportunity of general pacification? was it not rather probable, was it not evident, that is, in the former instance, having detached Austria from the coalition, the whole force of France was bent against the interests of this country; so now it was intended merely to make sure of our inactivity by entangling us in negociation, in order that the undivided efforts of the government of France might be directed against the court of Vienna?—It was our turn now to have a truce, while the power of Austria should be exhausted; as Austria had formerly been allowed to breathe, while the full vengeance of France was let loose against Great Britain:—and as, when that experiment had been tried, Austria was speedily forced back into the war—what right had we to flatter ourselves that our repose would have been permitted to be more secure, or of longer continuance?

"There remained another consideration personal to the first consul, which it was impossible to leave wholly out of the question; and this was the stability of government; without which, it was plain, that there could be no security for any peace which we might conclude with him at the present moment. Upon this point it could not be necessary to say much. Every probability, every presumption, was obviously against the permanence of a power, which rested on none of the known and intelligent principles, on which a government had ever yet been supported;—a power possessed by republicans, which was built upon the wreck and ruins of every principle of freedom; a power professing to emanate from the people, which no one class or description of the people had either a share in creating, or an interest in preserving; a despotism without the sanction of prescription, or the mitigation of established laws, or usages, or manners; a military despotism proposing to maintain itself by universal peace: these were anomalies, which it became those gentlemen to explain, and to reconcile to common understandings; to reconcile, if they could, with past experience, or with any reasonable theory, when they contended for the stability of the new government in France; or was there some high and mysterious principle of preservation, such as the vulgar and uninitiated could not comprehend, which would watch over the destinies of Buonaparte? was it, that owing his crown, as Macbeth was described to owe his, to 'fate and metaphysical aid;'—it

was expected that the 'metaphysical aid' of Sieyes, who had helped him to the crown, would be able, under all chances, to keep it safe upon his head? that there was some charm contrived by that 'wierd' Abbé, which would baffle all combinations that 'man of woman born could bring against him?'"—*Debate on the Overture of Peace from the Consular Government of France*, A. D. 1800.

"The remaining objection of the hon. gentleman was one that applied more largely, not to this subsidy only, but to every measure that went in any degree to strengthen the hands of the present ministers, either for the prosecution of the war, or for the negociation of peace. The hon. gentleman gave it as his decided opinion that the present ministers had utterly disqualified themselves from conducting the war to an honourable termination, and even for treating for peace with a government, at the head of which is a man whom, as the phrase is, they had abused so grossly: Buonaparte could never be expected to listen with patience to the proposals which such men might offer to him, or to offer them any terms but such as it would be disgraceful and disastrous for the country to accept. Mr. Canning said, that as he was himself no panegyrist of Buonaparte, he was not interested in refuting this calumny upon his character, which his admirers were unaccountably (as he thought) so forward in throwing upon it. He was not the person to proclaim Buonaparte as a hero, excelling in every great quality of the mind all those who have gone before him in ancient or modern times; but if he had been such an enthusiast in his admiration of Buonaparte, he should have felt it rather awkward to mix with these praises an imputation of such meanness, such littleness of feeling, of such a poor creeping, pusillanimous spirit, as was implied by saying, 'this great man, with all his magnanimity, has one trifling peculiarity; he cannot bear to be spoken of with disrespect; he never treats with any government who have talked lightly of his character and conduct; it is a rule with him not to do so; rather than conclude a peace with such men he will continue the ravages of war, the distress of his own country, the interruption of the happiness of private families, all of which, he has himself told us, he naturally wishes to avoid

more than any other man alive; but he will continue them for ever rather than negociate with men who have spoken ill of him!' How far this might be the character and feeling of this extraordinary man, those who most admired him were best qualified to tell. For my own part (said Mr. Canning), having taken some share in former debates, in which that which is called abuse of Buonaparte was necessarily introduced, I am not sorry to have an opportunity of saying a very few words upon this subject, especially as much has lately been said in this place of the unmanliness of the attacks which were made on the character of the first consul at the period when his overtures for negociation were declined by this government, and of the shame which those who had any part in this language are now supposed to take to themselves, and the anxiety which it is apprehended they must feel to retract and disavow all that they then so rashly and illiberally uttered. Now, sir, as I feel no sort of shame, and entertain not the smallest disposition to retract any thing that was then said, I wish to explain the principles upon which I spoke, and upon which I now maintain whatever I did then say. I do not know whether the hon. gentleman will quite understand me, because I do not know that we set out to argue this matter from the same principle; and if not, there is no hope of our coming to any understanding. My principle, sir, is simply this: there is but one thing, which I never wish to forbear speaking when called upon, and which, having spoken, I can at no time feel ashamed of, nor consent to disavow, retract, or qualify; and that is the truth. If what was said of Buonaparte was untrue, that is an accusation of which I know the meaning, and which, if need be, I am prepared to argue. But if it was true, I confess I am at a loss to conceive where the shame lies, or where the necessity for contradicting it. If, indeed, the nature and essence of truth were capable of being altered by subsequent events, there might be some call for caution in uttering it, and there might be some room for qualification afterwards. But, if this be not the case, I really do not comprehend what is meant by desiring us, who said what we thought of Buonaparte's past actions at the time when we were called upon to examine them, and who still think precisely what we said of them, to take any shame to ourselves

for our language. I at least still think as I then thought; and I do not see what ground the events of the last campaign can furnish for changing my opinion. If, for instance, in Buonaparte's invasion of Egypt there was treachery and fraud; if, in his conduct towards its inhabitants, there was unprovoked cruelty; if, in his assumption of the turban, there was impious hypocrisy; I called these qualities by their name: I call them so still; and I say that this hypocrisy, this cruelty, and this fraud, have left indelible stains upon his character, which all the laurels of Marengo cannot cover, nor all its blood wash away. I know, sir, there is a cautious, cowardly, bastard, morality, which assumes the garb and tone of wisdom; and which prescribes to you to live with an enemy as if he were one day to become your friend; I distrust this doctrine for one reason, because I fear the same mind, which could pride itself on adopting it, would be capable of entertaining the doctrine which is the converse of it, and would prescribe living with a friend as if he were one day to become an enemy. If this be wisdom, I do not boast it; I can only say, Heaven grant me a host of such enemies, rather than one such friend!

"So much, sir, as to the moral question upon this point. But then, as to the practical result, what is it that gentlemen are afraid of? Do they seriously apprehend, that with such declared opinions of Buonaparte's personal character, ministers can never treat with him? Nothing surely can be more visionary than such an apprehension. If the nation with whom we are at war, thinking (I suppose) for reasons of its own, more favourably of his character, or for whatever reason, choose to make this man the depositary of the power of the state, and the organ of its intercourse with foreign powers, ministers may lament—they may be surprised at such a choice; but where did gentlemen learn, that between these ministers, and a government whose character and principles they disapproved, there could be no treaty? Not from the experience of the present war; for in the time of the good old Directory, what floods of abuse were poured upon our ministers from the reading-desks of the assemblies! and yet I never heard this urged as an impediment to treaty, either on the part of France or of this country. Not from the history of former wars; for in the wars against Louis

XIV., the addresses carried up from this and the other house of parliament, nay the sacred lips which spoke from the throne of this kingdom, breathed stronger invectives against that monarch than are to be found in any of the state papers so much complained of for the harshness of their language towards Buonaparte: and yet I never heard that these just invectives were considered as throwing any obstacle in the way of negociation; or that, when the time of negociation came, the conclusion of peace was in fact retarded by them. But perhaps there may be some distinction to be taken; perhaps the dignity of a lawful sovereign will bear without wincing rougher language than that with which it is decent or delicate to tickle the ears of an usurper.

"But neither, sir, was the attack upon the character of Buonaparte a wanton and unprovoked attack, as the hon. gentleman would represent it. When Buonaparte challenged us to acknowledge and act upon the stability of his government before it was three days old, we doubted, as well we might, the stability of such a government, and thought all probabilities against it. To clear up our doubts, he referred us to his personal character, as the pledge both for the permanency of his power, and for the use which he would make of it. What were we to do? to acquiesce, without examination, in what we heartily and in our consciences disbelieved? or to examine the value of the pledge which was offered us, and to give our reasons for not being willing to accept it? We preferred the latter alternative, as in fairness and in common sense we were compelled to do. What ground, then, had we to estimate Buonaparte's personal character but his past actions? These, therefore, we were obliged to scrutinize; in scrutinizing them we were struck with their deformity; and that deformity we were obliged to expose to the world as a justification of our own conduct. If the event has contradicted the expectations which it was natural to form under the circumstances of the time; if the extraordinary, and certainly unlooked-for, successes of the campaign have given stability to Buonaparte's power (for the present, at least, whatever may and must, in all human probability, be the ultimate fate of a power so acquired, and resting on such foundations); if the battle of Marengo, though it did not overthrow Austria, has subjugated France; undoubtedly, this change of circum-

stances may authorize and warrant a change of policy; and supposing the time to arrive when negociation may be in other respects proper, undoubtedly (speaking my own individual opinion) I should say, that the question of Buonaparte's power would not now stand, as it before did most necessarily stand, in the way of negociation.

"It is indeed not surprising, that some gentlemen should wish to inculcate the apprehension, that an insurmountable obstacle to peace exists in the personal resentment and personal antipathy between Buonaparte and the present ministers of this country; as the obvious cure for such an incompetency on the part of ministers here would be to remove them. And I have been told that the proper steps have already been taken in this house to advertise for the succession to them. The usual and approved method on these occasions is, I believe, for a gentleman to contend with all his might for the necessity of a change; and, while he argues that fitter men must be found to replace the present ministers, to disclaim for himself any pretension or wish to be selected for that purpose. Hereupon, the house is expected to express, by some token of acquiescence, its approbation of the change, and its dissent from the self-disqualification of the proposer. And 'upon this hint he speaks;' but this hint, I am told, the house unluckily did not give on the occasion to which I allude. The change was proposed; the expediency of speedy new appointments suggested; the self-disqualification stated; but, all this while, the house did not appear to be at all moved; and so the thing fell flat; and, for the present at least, no change of ministers seems to be required."—*Debate on the Subsidies to the Emperor of Germany*, A. D. 1800.

"Ministers could not be justly accused of inconsistency or tergiversation, though they had ceased to canvass the private character of Buonaparte, though they no longer styled him the child and champion of jacobinism, the most enthusiastic supporter of its power, and the gaudiest puppet of its folly. This change, in their language, had not perhaps proceeded from any change in his character, and later transactions had perhaps proved that their former language was not misapplied. Had he not merely to pronounce the words Tuscany and perfidy, to show

that the individual feelings of the chief consul remained unaltered, and that those feelings were none of the most laudable? But his power was now established, and it was no longer necessary to discuss his character. Last winter there was every reason to believe that he could not long maintain his power, and it behoved those who held that opinion to show that it was well founded. Now that he had become the organ of the will, and the arbiter of the fate of France, there could be no objection to treat with him; and that ministers were of that opinion, the papers on the table sufficiently evinced."—*Debate on Mr. Tierney's Motion for a Committee on the State of the Nation*, A. D. 1800.

Not only did Mr. Canning support the ministers by his powerful exertions in parliament: he employed the formidable weapon of the press to pour execration and contempt upon their enemies. In conjunction with his friends, Mr. Frere and Mr. Ellis, he brought out "the Antijacobin Examiner," a weekly satirical paper. Its invective was malignant, and its wit, for the most part, consisted of personal abuse. It was written in the true *spirit* of jacobinism, though it was avowedly directed against the *letter*. It was the literary Robespierre of the day. Yet its manner was gentlemanly—the executioner does his business gracefully; the axe is smoothed and sharpened to a razor's keenness, and the victims are all laid out for a decent interment. It is not mangling, but dissection, and performed with the nicest skill. It is amusing to see the laureate of Wat Tyler, now the laureate of George the Fourth, writhing under the keen incision, and suffering as a martyr to principles and associations which he must now blush to remember. Dr. Southey and Lepaux! Before we introduce the satires of Mr. Canning, which are certainly the attic salt of the An-

tijacobin, we will just inform our readers who and what Lepaux was, and also the Leviathan which makes so conspicuous a figure in the "New Morality," one of the most finished of Mr. Canning's productions.

Louis Maire Lareveilliere Lepaux was one of the five directors, to whom the power of the republican constitution of 1795 intrusted the suprême authority over the dominions of France. He was, partly by accident and partly by intrigue, raised to the Directory. His person was peculiarly ugly; his visage expressive of cowardice and malignity; his back crooked, and his whole appearance filthy and deformed. Carnot says, "there exists not a greater hypocrite, nor a more immoral man, than Lareveilliere; nature having formed him disgusting to the sight and smell, seems to have cautioned those who approach him of the falsehood and depravity of his heart."

The Leviathan that is called upon by the satirist, to join with Dr. Southey in lauding this monstrous abortion of humanity and full grown fiend of darkness, Mr. Burke describes in his Letter to a Noble Lord, on the attacks made upon him and his pension in the house of lords by the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale. In apology for Mr. Burke, we may observe, that he was provoked, and that his retaliation, though severe, is wholly free from malignity. But neither the one nor the other is true of Mr. Canning. The unlucky passage from Burke, which in an evil hour hurried him into this violation of the courtesies of life, is indeed eloquent, and to the noble duke must have been monitory. "The Duke of Bedford is the leviathan among all the creatures of the crown. He tumbles about his unwieldy bulk; he plays and

frolics in the ocean of the royal bounty. Huge as he is, and whilst 'he is floating many a rood,' he is still a creature. His ribs, his fins, his whalebone, his blubber, the very spiracles through which he spouts a torrent of brine against his origin, and covers me all over with the spray; every thing of him and about him is from the throne. Is it for *him* to question the dispensation of the royal favour?" With these preliminary explanations, not necessary at the time of its first publication, we introduce "New Morality;" a burlesque on Mr. Southey's Sapphics, entitled "The Friend of Humanity and the Knife-Grinder;" and a parody on his "Inscription for the Apartment in Chepstow Castle, where Henry Marten, the regicide, was imprisoned thirty years." Southey, the ultra tory, must feel a strange kind of sympathy with the severe chastiser of Southey the radical; and who knows but that a change back again may produce a similar feeling, as he reads the *radical* attacks upon his abandoned toryism in the writings of Lord Byron. To smart under the lash for sins so opposite, and alternately to kiss the rod, and to embrace, in turn, each inflictor of the pain, would be the singular fate of a double apostacy. This, it may be said, is impossible! A radical may become a tory, but a tory never can be a radical. But ask Dr. Southey to write a comment upon the aphorism "once a jacobin always a jacobin." We shall see. In the mean time, thanks to Mr. Canning, and thanks to Lord Byron. The one has shamed the radical, the other has lashed the changeling: both are true to nature. But to the subject.

NEW MORALITY.

From mental mists to purge a nation's eyes;
To animate the weak, unite the wise;
To trace the deep infection that pervades
The crowded town, and taints the rural shades;
To mark how wide extends the mighty waste
O'er the fair realms of science, learning, taste;
To drive and scatter all the brood of lies,
And chase the varying falsehood as it flies;
The long arrears of ridicule to pay,
To drag reluctant Dulness back to day;
Much yet remains.—To you these themes belong,
Ye favour'd sons of virtue and of song!

Say, is the field too narrow? Are the times
Barren of folly, and devoid of crimes?

Yet, venial vices, in a milder age,
Could rouse the warmth of Pope's satiric rage:
The doting miser, and the lavish heir,
The follies and the foibles of the fair,
Sir Job, Sir Balaam, and old Euclio's thrift,
And Sappho's diamonds with her dirty shift,
Blunt, Charteris, Hopkins,—meaner subjects fired
The keen-eyed poet; while the muse inspired
Her ardent child,—entwining, as he sate,
His laurelled chaplet with the thorns of hate.

But say,—indignant does the muse retire,
Her shrine deserted, and extinct its fire?
No pious hand to feed the sacred flame,
No raptured soul a poet's charge to claim?

Bethink thee, Gifford; when some future age
Shall trace the promise of thy playful page;—
"The hand which brush'd a swarm of fools away *
Should rouse to grasp a more reluctant prey!"—

* See the motto prefixed to "The Baviad," a satirical poem,

Think then, will pleaded indolence excuse
The tame secession of thy languid Muse?

Ah! where is now that promise? why so long
Sleep the keen shafts of satire and of song?
Oh! come, with Taste and Virtue at thy side,
With ardent zeal inflamed, and patriot pride;
With keen poetic glance direct the blow,
And empty all thy quiver on the foe:—
No pause—no rest—till weltering on the ground
The poisonous hydra lies, and pierced with many a wound.

Thou too!—the nameless bard *,—whose honest zeal
For law, for morals, for the public weal,
Pours down impetuous on thy country's foes
The stream of verse, and many-languaged prose;
Thou too!—though oft thy ill-advised dislike
The guiltless head with random censure strike,—
Though quaint allusions, vague and undefined,
Play faintly round the ear, but mock the mind;—
Through the mix'd mass yet truth and learning shine,
And manly vigour stamps the nervous line:
And patriot warmth the generous rage inspires,
And wakes and points the desultory fires!

Yet more remain unknown: for who can tell
What bashful genius, in some rural cell,
As year to year, and day succeeds to day,
In joyless leisure wastes his life away?
In him the flame of early fancy shone;
His genuine worth his old companions own;

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by W. Gifford, Esq.; unquestionably the best of its kind, since the days of Pope.

——— Nunc in ovilia
Mox in reluctantes dracones.

* The author of "The Pursuits of Literature."

In childhood and in youth their chief confess'd,
His master's pride; his pattern to the rest.
Now, far aloof retiring from the strife
Of busy talents, and of active life,
As, from the loop-holes of retreat, he views
Our stage, verse, pamphlets, politics, and news,
He loathes the world,—or with reflection sad
Concludes it irrecoverably mad;
Of taste, of learning, morals, all bereft,
No hope, no prospect to redeem it left.

Awake! for shame! or ere thy nobler sense
Sink in the' oblivious pool of indolence!
Must wit be found alone on falsehood's side,
Unknown to truth, to virtue unallied?
Arise! nor scorn thy country's just alarms;
Wield in her cause thy long neglected arms:
Of lofty satire pour the' indignant strain,
Leagued with her friends, and ardent to maintain
'Gainst learning's, virtue's, truth's, religion's foes,
A kingdom's safety, and the world's repose.

If vice appal thee,—if thou view with awe
Insults that brave, and crimes that 'scape the law;—
Yet may the specious bastard brood, which claim
A spurious homage under virtue's name,
Sprung from that parent of ten thousand crimes,
The New Philosophy of modern times,—
Yet these may rouse thee!—*With unsparing hand*
Oh lash the vile impostures from the land!

First, stern Philanthropy:—*not she who dries*
The orphan's tears, and wipes the widow's eyes;
Not she, who, sainted Charity her guide,
Of British bounty pours the annual *tide*:—
But French Philanthropy;—whose boundless *mind*
Glows with the general love of all mankind:
Philanthropy,—beneath whose baneful sway
Each patriot passion sinks, and dies away.

Taught in her school to' imbibe thy mawkish strain,
Condorcet, filter'd through the dregs of Paine,

Each pert adept disowns a Briton's part,
And plucks the name of England from his heart.

What! shall a name, a word, a sound control
The' aspiring thought, and cramp the' expansive soul?
Shall one half-peopled island's rocky round
A love that glows for all creation bound?
And social charities contract the plan
Framed for thy freedom, universal man?
—No—through the' extended globe his feelings run,
As broad and general as the' unbounded sun!
No narrow bigot he; his reason'd view
Thy interests, England, ranks with thine, Peru!
France at our doors, he sees no danger nigh,
But heaves for Turkey's woes the' impartial sigh;
A steady patriot of the world alone,
The friend of every country—but his own.

Next comes a gentler virtue.—Ah! beware
Lest the harsh verse her shrinking softness scare.
Visit her not too roughly;—the warm sigh
Breathes on her lips;—the tear-drop gems her eye.
Sweet Sensibility, who dwells enshrined
In the fine foldings of the feeling mind;
With delicate mimosa's sense endued,
Who shrinks instinctive from a hand too rude;
Or like the anagallis, prescient flower,
Shuts her soft petals at the' approaching shower.

Sweet child of sickly Fancy!—Her of yore
From her loved France Rousseau to exile bore;
And, while 'midst lakes and mountains wild he ran,
Full of himself, and shunned the haunts of man,
Taught her o'er each lone vale and Alpine steep
To lisp the story of his wrongs, and weep;
Taught her to cherish still, in either eye,
Of tender tears a plentiful supply,
And pour them in the brooks that babbled by;
Taught by nice scale to mete her feelings strong,
False by degrees, and exquisitely wrong;

For the crush'd beetle, first, the widow'd dove,
And all the warbled sorrows of the grove;
Next for poor suffering guilt; and, last of all,
For parents, friends, a king and country's fall.

Mark her fair votaries, prodigal of grief,
With cureless pangs, and woes that mock relief,
Droop in soft sorrow o'er a faded flower;
O'er a dead jack-ass pour the pearly shower:
But hear, unmoved, of Loire's ensanguined flood,
Choked up with slain; of Lyons drench'd in blood;
Of crimes that blot the age, the world, with shame,
Foul crimes, but sicklied o'er with Freedom's name;
Altars and thrones subverted, social life
Trampled to earth,—the husband from the wife,
Parent from child, with ruthless fury torn,—
Of talents, honour, virtue, wit, forlorn,
In friendless exile,—of the wise and good
Staining the daily scaffold with their blood,—
Of savage cruelties, that scare the mind,
The rage of madness with hell's lusts combined—
Of hearts torn reeking from the mangled breast,—
They hear—and hope that all is for the best.

Fond hope! but Justice sanctifies the prayer—
Justice!—Here, Satire, strike; 't were sin to spare!
Not she in British courts that takes her stand,
The dawdling balance dangling in her hand,
Adjusting punishments to fraud and vice,
With scrupulous quirks, and disquisition nice:
But firm, erect, with keen reverted glance,
The avenging angel of regenerate France,
Who visits ancient sins on modern times,
And punishes the Pope for Cæsar's crimes *.

* The manes of Vercengetorix are supposed to have been very much gratified by the invasion of Italy and the plunder of the Roman territory. The defeat of the Burgundians is to be revenged on the modern inhabitants of Switzerland. But the

Such is the liberal Justice which presides
In these our days, and modern patriots guides;
Justice, whose blood-stain'd book one sole decree,
One statute fills—"The people shall be free."
Free by what means? by folly, madness, guilt,
By boundless rapines, blood in oceans spilt;
By confiscation, in whose sweeping toils
The poor man's pittance with the rich man's spoils,
Mix'd in one common mass, are swept away,
To glut the short-lived tyrant of the day;—
By laws, religion, morals all o'erthrown:—
—Rouse then, ye sovereign people, claim your own;—
The licence that enthrals, the truth that blinds,
The wealth that starves you, and the power that grinds.
—So Justice bids.—'Twas her enlighten'd doom,
Louis, thy holy head devoted to the tomb!
'Twas Justice claim'd, in that accursed hour,
The fatal forfeit of too lenient power.
—Mourn for the man we may;—but for the king,—
Freedom, oh! Freedom 's such a charming thing!

"Much may be said on both sides."—Hark! I hear
A well-known voice that murmurs in my ear,—
The voice of Candour.—Hail! most solemn sage,
Thou driveling virtue of this moral age,
Candour, which softens party's headlong rage;
Candour,—which spares its foes;—nor e'er descends
With bigot zeal to combat for its friends.
Candour,—which loves in see-saw strain to tell
Of acting foolishly, but meaning well;

Swiss were a free people, defending their liberties against a tyrant. Moreover, they happened to be in alliance with France at the time. No matter, Burgundy is since become a province of France, and the French have acquired a property in all the injuries and defeats, which the people of that country may have sustained, together with a title to revenge and retaliation to be exercised in the present, or any future centuries, as may be found most glorious and convenient.

Too nice to praise by wholesale, or to blame,
Convinced that all men's motives are the same;—
And finds, with keen discriminating sight,
Black 's not so black;—nor white so very white.

"Fox, to be sure, was vehement and wrong:—
But then Pitt's words, you'll own, were rather strong.
Both must be blamed, both pardon'd;—'t was just so
With Fox and Pitt full forty years ago;
So Walpole, Pulteney;—factions in all times
Have had their follies, ministers their crimes."

Give me the' avow'd, the erect, the manly foe,
Bold I can meet,—perhaps may turn his blow;
But of all plagues, good Heaven, thy wrath can send,
Save, save, oh! save me from the candid friend!

"Barras loves plunder,—Merlin takes a bribe,—
What then?—Shall Candour these good men proscribe?
No! ere we join the loud-accusing throng,
Prove,—not the facts,—but, that they thought them wrong.

"Why hang O'Quigley?—he, misguided man,
In sober thought his country's weal might plan.
And, while his deep-wrought treason sapped the throne,
Might act from taste in morals, all his own."

Peace to such reasoners!—let them have their way;
Shut their dull eyes against the blaze of day.—
Priestley 's a saint, and Stone a patriot still;
And La Fayette a hero, if they will.

I love the bold uncompromising mind,
Whose principles are fix'd, whose views defined:
Who scouts and scorns, in canting Candour's spite,
All taste in morals, innate sense of right,
And nature's impulse, all uncheck'd by art,
And feelings fine, that float about the heart:—
Content, for good men's guidance, bad men's awe,
On moral truth to rest, and gospel law.

Who owns, when traitors feel the' avenging rod,
Just retribution, and the hand of God;
Who hears the groans through Olmutz' roofs that ring,
Of him who mock'd, misled, betray'd his king—
Hears unappall'd:—though faction's zealots preach—
Unmoved, unsoften'd by F*tzp*tr*ck's speech.

That speech on which the melting commons hung *,
"While truths divine came mended from his tongue"—
How loving husband clings to duteous wife,—
How pure religion soothes the ills of life,—
How popish ladies trust their pious fears
And naughty actions in their chaplain's ears.—
Half novel and half sermon, on it flow'd;
With pious zeal the Opposition glow'd;
And as o'er each the soft infection crept,
Sigh'd as he whined, and as he whimper'd wept;—
E'en C**w*n dropt a sentimental tear,
And stout St. A*dr*w yelp'd a softer "hear!"

O! nurse of crimes and fashions! which in vain
Our colder servile spirits would attain,
How do we ape thee, France! but blundering still
Disgrace the pattern by our want of skill.

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* The speech of General F-tzp-tr-ck, on his motion for an address of the house of commons to the Emperor of Germany, to demand the deliverance of M. La Fayette from the prison of Olmutz, was one of the most dainty pieces of oratory that ever drew tears from a crowded gallery, and the clerks at the table. It was really quite moving to hear the general talk of religion, conjugal fidelity, and "such branches of learning." There were a few who laughed indeed, but that was thought hard-hearted and immoral, and irreligious, and God knows what. Crying was the order of the day. Why will not the opposition try these topics again? La Fayette indeed (the more 's the pity) is out. But why not a motion for a general gaol-delivery of all state prisoners throughout Europe?

The borrow'd step our awkward gait reveals:
(As clumsy C**rtn*y* mars the verse he steals).

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* See Anti-Jacobin, vol. i. p. 376, in the note, for a theft more shameless, and an application of the thing stolen more stupid, than any of those recorded of Irish story-tellers by Joe Miller.

The following is the note alluded to. It illustrates the words "Courtney's kidnapped rhymes," in a severe reply "to the author of the Epistle to the Editors of the Anti-Jacobin," which epistle appeared in the Morning Chronicle.

"This is a serious charge against an author, and ought to be well supported. To the proof, then!

"In an Ode of the late Lord Nugent's are the following spirited lines:—

'Though Cato lived—though Tully spoke—
Though Brutus dealt the godlike stroke,
Yet perish'd fated Rome!'

"The author above-mentioned saw these lines, and liked them—as well he might: and as he had a mind to write about Rome himself, he did not scruple to enlist them into his service; but he thought it right to make a small alteration in their appearance, which he managed thus:—Speaking of Rome, he says, it is the place

'*Where* Cato lived.'

"A sober truth: which gets rid at once of all the poetry and spirit of the original, and reduces the sentiment from an example of manners, virtue, patriotism, from the *vitæ exempla dedit* of Lord Nugent, to a mere question of inhabitancy. *Ubi habitavit Cato*—where he was an inhabitant householder, paying scot and lot, and had a house on the right-hand side of the way, as you go down Esquiline Hill, just opposite to the poulterer's.—But to proceed—

'*Where* Cato lived; *where* Tully spoke,
Where Brutus dealt the godlike stroke,—
——*By which his glory rose!!!*'

How do we ape thee, France!—nor claim alone
Thy arts, thy tastes, thy morals for our own,
But to thy worthies render homage due,
Their * "hair-breadth 'scapes" with anxious interest view;
Statesmen and heroines whom this age adores,
Though plainer times would call them rogues and whores.

See Louvet, patriot, pamphleteer, and sage,
Tempering with amorous fire his virtuous rage.
Form'd for all tasks, his various talents see,—
The luscious novel, the severe decree.
—Then mark him weltering in his nasty stye,
Bare his lewd transports to the public eye.
Not his the love in silent groves that strays,
Quits the rude world, and shuns the vulgar gaze.
In Lodoiska's full possession blest,
One craving void still aches within his breast;—
Plunged in the filth and fondness of her arms,
Not to himself alone he stints her charms;
Clasp'd in each other's foul embrace they lie,
But know no joy, unless the world stands by.
—The fool of vanity, for her alone
He lives, loves, writes, and dies, but to be known.

His widow'd mourner flies to poison's aid,
Eager to join her Louvet's parted shade

"The last line is not borrowed.

"We question whether the history of modern literature can produce an instance of a theft so shameless, and turned to so little advantage."

* See Récit de mes Perils, by Louvet. Memoires d'un Detenu, by Riouffe, &c. The avidity with which these productions were read, might, we should hope, be accounted for upon principles of mere curiosity (as we read the Newgate Calendar and the History of the Buccaneers), not from any interest in favour of a set of wretches, infinitely more detestable than all the robbers and pirates that ever existed.

In those bright realms where sainted lovers stray,—
But harsh emetics tear that hope away *.
—Yet, hapless Louvet! where thy bones are laid,
The easy nymphs shall consecrate the shade †.
There, in the laughing morn of genial Spring,
Unwedded pairs shall tender couplets sing;
Eringoes o'er the hallow'd spot shall bloom,
And flies of Spain buzz softly round the tomb ‡.

But hold! severer virtue claims the Muse—
Roland the just, with ribands in his shoes—§
And Roland's spouse, who paints with chaste delight
The doubtful conflict of her nuptial night;—
Her virgin charms what fierce attacks assail'd,
And how the rigid minister || prevail'd.

And ah! what verse can grace thy stately mien,
Guide of the world, Preferment's golden queen,
Neckar's fair daughter,—Stael the epicene!
Bright o'er whose flaming cheek and pumple ¶ nose
The bloom of young desire unceasing glows!
Fain would the muse—but ah! she dares no more;
A mournful voice from lone Guyana's shore **

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* Every lover of modern French literature, and admirer of modern French characters, must remember the rout which was made about Louvet's death, and Lodoiska's poison. The attempt at self-slaughter, and the process of the recovery, the arsenic and the castor oil, were served up in daily messes from the French papers, till the public absolutely sickened.

† Faciles Napeæ.

‡ See Anthologia passim.

§ Such was the strictness of this minister's principles, that he positively refused to go to court in shoe-buckles.—See Dumourier's Memoirs.

|| See Madame Roland's Memoirs—"Rigide Ministre," Brissot à ses Commetans.

¶ The "pumple"-nosed attorney of Furnival's Inn.—Congreve's Way of the World.

** These lines contain the secret history of Quatremere's de-

—Sad Quatremere—the bold presumption checks,
Forbid to question thy ambiguous sex.

To thee proud Barras bows;—thy charms control
Rewbell's brute rage, and Merlin's subtle soul;
Raised by thy hands, and fashion'd to thy will,
Thy power, thy guiding influence governs still,
Where at the blood-stain'd board expert he plies,
The lame artificer of fraud and lies;
He with the mitred head, and cloven heel:—
Doom'd the coarse edge of Rewbell's jests to feel *;
To stand the playful buffet, and to hear
The frequent ink-stand whizzing past his ear;
While all the five directors laugh to see
"The limping priest so deft at his new ministry †."

Last of the' anointed five behold, and least,
The directorial lama, sovereign priest,—

---

portation. He presumed in the Council of Five Hundred to arraign Madame de Stael's conduct, and even to hint a doubt of her sex. He was sent to Guyana. The transaction naturally brings to one's mind the dialogue between Falstaff and Hostess Quickly in Shakspeare's Henry the IVth.

"*Falstaff*.—Thou art neither fish nor flesh—a man cannot tell where to have thee.

"*Quickly*.—Thou art an unjust man for saying so—thou or any man knows where to have me."

* For instance, in the course of a political discussion, Rewbell observed to the ex-bishop—"that his understanding was as crooked as his legs"—"Vil emigré, tu n'as pas le sens plus droit que les pieds"—and therewith threw an ink-stand at him. It whizzed along, as we have been informed, like the fragment of a rock from the hand of one of Ossian's heroes:—but the wily apostate shrunk beneath the table, and the weapon passed over him, innocuous and guiltless of his blood or brains.

† See Homer's description of Vulcan, First Iliad:

Inextinguibilis vero exoriebatur risus beatis numinibus
Ut viderunt Vulcanum per domos *ministrantem*.

Lepaux:—whom atheists worship;—at whose nod
Bow their meek heads the men without a god*.

Ere long, perhaps, to this astonish'd isle,
Fresh from the shores of subjugated Nile,
Shall Buonaparte's victor fleet protect
The genuine theo-philanthropic sect,—
The sect of Marat, Mirabeau, Voltaire,—
Led by their pontiff, good La Reveillere.
Rejoiced our clubs shall greet him, and install
The holy hunch-back in thy dome, St. Paul!
While countless votaries thronging in his train
Wave their red caps, and hymn this jocund strain

"Couriers and Stars, sedition's evening host,
Thou Morning Chronicle, and Morning Post!
Whether ye make the rights of man your theme,
Your country libel, and your God blaspheme,
Or dirt on private worth and virtue throw,
Still blasphemous or blackguard, praise Lepaux.

"And ye five other wandering bards that move
In sweet accord of harmony and love,
C*****dge and S**th*y, L***d, and L**b and Co.
Tune all your mystic harps to praise Lepaux!

"Pr***tl*y and W***f**ld, humble, holy men,
Give praises to his name with tongue and pen!

"Th*lw*l, and ye that lecture as ye go,
And for your pains get pelted, praise Lepaux!

---

* The men without a god—one of the new sects.—Their religion is intended to consist in the adoration of a great book, in which all the virtuous actions of the society are to be entered and registered. "In times of civil commotion they are to come forward, to exhort the citizens to unanimity, and to read them a chapter out of the great book. When oppressed or proscribed, they are to retire to a burying ground, to wrap themselves up in their great coats, and wait the approach of death," &c.

" Praise him each jacobin, or fool, or knave,
And your cropped heads in sign of worship wave!

" All creeping creatures, venomous and low,
Paine, W*ll**ms, G*dw*n, H*lcr*ft—praise Lepaux!

" And thou leviathan! on ocean's brim
Hugest of living things that sleep and swim;
Thou in whose nose by Burke's gigantic hand
The hook was fixed to drag thee to the land,
With ——, ———, and ———* in thy train,
And ——— wallowing in the yeasty main—†
Still as ye snort, and puff, and spout, and blow,
In puffing, and in spouting, praise Lepaux!"

Britain, beware; nor let the' insidious foe,
Of force despairing, aim a deadlier blow.
Thy peace, thy strength, with devilish wiles assail,
And when her arms are vain, by arts prevail.
True, thou art rich, art powerful!—through thine isle
Industrious Skill, contented Labour, smile;
Far seas are studded with thy countless sails;
What wind but wafts them, and what shore but hails?
True, thou art brave!—o'er all the busy land
In patriot ranks embattled myriads stand;
Thy foes behold with impotent amaze,
And drop the lifted weapon as they gaze!

---

* The reader is at liberty to fill up the blanks according to his own opinion, and after the chances and changes of the times. It would be highly unfair to hand down to posterity, as followers of leviathan, the names of men who may, and probably will soon, grow ashamed of their leader.

† Though the yeasty sea
Consume and swallow navigation up.
MACBETH.

But what avails to guard each outward part,
If subtlest poison, circling at thy heart,
Spite of thy courage, of thy power, and wealth,
Mine the sound fabric of thy vital health?

So thine own oak, by some fair streamlet's side,
Waves its broad arms, and spreads its leafy pride,
Towers from the earth, and rearing to the skies
Its conscious strength, the tempest's wrath defies.
Its ample branches shield the fowls of air,
To its cool shade the panting herds repair.—
The treacherous current works its noiseless way,—
The fibres loosen, and the roots decay;
Prostrate the beauteous ruin lies; and all
That shared its shelter, perish in its fall.

O thou!—lamented sage!—whose prescient scan
Pierced through foul anarchy's gigantic plan,
Prompt to incredulous hearers to disclose
The guilt of France, and Europe's world of woes;—
Thou, on whose name posterity shall gaze,
The mighty sea-mark of these troubled days!
O large of soul, of genius unconfined,
Born to delight, instruct, and mend mankind!—
Burke! in whose breast a Roman ardour glow'd;
Whose copious tongue with Grecian richness flow'd;
Well hast thou found (if such thy country's doom)
A timely refuge in the sheltering tomb!

As, in far realms, where eastern kings are laid,
In pomp of death, beneath the cypress shade,
The perfumed lamp with unextinguish'd light
Flames through the vault, and cheers the gloom of night:—
So, mighty Burke! in thy sepulchral urn,
To fancy's view, the lamp of truth shall burn.
Thither late times shall turn their reverent eyes,
Led by thy light, and by thy wisdom wise.

There are, to whom (their taste such pleasures cloy)
No light thy wisdom yields, thy wit no joy.

Peace to their heavy heads, and callous hearts,
Peace—such as sloth, as ignorance imparts!—
Pleased may they live to plan their country's good,
And crop with calm content their flowery food!

What though thy venturous spirit loved to urge
The labouring theme to reason's utmost verge,
Kindling and mounting from the' enraptured sight;—
Till anxious Wonder watch'd thy daring flight!
While vulgar souls, with mean malignant stare,
Gazed up, the triumph of thy fall to share;
Poor triumph! price of that extorted praise,
Which still to daring genius envy pays.

Oh! for thy playful smile,—thy potent frown,—
To' abash bold vice, and laugh pert folly down!
So should the muse, in humour's happiest vein,
With verse that flow'd in metaphoric strain,
And apt allusions to the rural trade,
Tell, of what wood young jacobins are made;
How the skill'd gardener grafts, with nicest rule,
The slip of coxcomb on the stock of fool;—
Forth in bright blossom bursts the tender sprig,
A thing to wonder at—perhaps * a whig.—
Should tell, how wise each half-fledged pedant prates
Of weightiest matters, grave distinctions states—
That rules of policy, and public good,
In Saxon times were rightly understood;
That kings are proper, may be useful things,
But then some gentlemen object to kings;
That in all times the minister's to blame;
That British liberty's an empty name,

* *i. e.* Perhaps a member of the Whig Club—a society that has presumed to monopolize to itself a title to which it never had any claim, but from the character of those who have now withdrawn themselves from it.—"Perhaps" signifies that even the Whig Club sometimes rejects a candidate, whose principles (*risum teneatis!*) it affects to disapprove.

Till each fair burgh, numerically free,
Shall choose its members by the rule of three.

So should the Muse, with verse in thunder clothed,
Proclaim the crimes by God and nature loathed,
Which—when fell poison revels in the veins—
(That poison fell which frantic Gallia drains
From the crude fruit of freedom's blasted tree)
Blot the fair records of humanity.

To feebler nations let proud France afford
Her damning choice,—the chalice or the sword,—
To drink or die;—oh fraud! oh, specious lie!
Delusive choice! for if they drink, they die.

The sword we dread not:—of ourselves secure,
Firm were our strength, our peace and freedom sure.—
Let all the world confederate all its powers,
"Be they not back'd by those that should be ours,"
High on his rock shall Britain's genius stand,
Scatter the crowded hosts, and vindicate the land.

Guard we but our own hearts: with constant view,
To ancient morals, ancient manners true,
True to the manlier virtues, such as nerved
Our father's breasts, and this proud isle preserved
For many a rugged age:—and scorn the while,—
Each philosophic atheist's specious guile,—
The soft seductions, the refinements nice,
Of gay morality, and easy vice:—
So shall we brave the storm;—our 'stablish'd power
Thy refuge, Europe, in some happier hour.—
But, French in heart—though victory crown our brow,
Low at our feet though prostrate nations bow,
Wealth gild our cities, commerce crowd our shore,—
London may shine, but England is no more.

THE FRIEND OF HUMANITY AND THE KNIFE-GRINDER.

Friend of Humanity.

" Needy knife-grinder! whither are you going?
Rough is the road, your wheel is out of order—
Bleak blows the blast;—your hat has got a hole in't,
So have your breeches!

" Weary knife-grinder! little think the proud ones,
Who in their coaches roll along the turnpike-
Road, what hard work 'tis crying all day, ' Knives and
Scissars to grind O!'

" Tell me, knife-grinder, how came you to grind knives?
Did some rich man tyrannically use you;
Was it the squire? or parson of the parish?
Or the attorney?

" Was it the squire, for killing of his game? or
Covetous parson, for his tithes distraining?
Or roguish lawyer, made you lose your little
All in a lawsuit?

" (Have you not read the Rights of Man, by Tom Paine?)
Drops of compassion tremble on my eyelids,
Ready to fall, as soon as you have told your
Pitiful story."

Knife-Grinder.

" Story! God bless you! I have none to tell, sir,
Only last night a-drinking at the Chequers,
This poor old hat and breeches, as you see, were
Torn in a scuffle.

" Constables came up for to take me into
Custody; they took me before the justice;
Justice Oldmixon put me in the parish-
-stocks for a vagrant.

" I should be glad to drink your Honour's health in
A pot of beer, if you will give me sixpence;
But for my part, I never love to meddle
With politics, sir."

Friend of Humanity.

" *I* give thee sixpence! I will see thee damn'd first—
Wretch! whom no sense of wrongs can rouse to vengeance—
Sordid, unfeeling, reprobate, degraded,
Spiritless outcast!"

Kicks the Knife-grinder, overturns his wheel, and exit in a transport of republican enthusiasm and universal philanthropy.

INSCRIPTION

For the Door of the Cell in Newgate, where Mrs. Brownrigg, the 'Prentice-cide, was confined previous to her Execution.

For one long term, or e'er her trial came,
Here Brownrigg linger'd. Often have these cells
Echoed her blasphemies, as with shrill voice
She scream'd for fresh Geneva. Not to her
Did the blithe fields of Tothill, or thy street,
St. Giles's, its fair varieties expand;
Till at the last in slow drawn cart she went
To execution. Dost thou ask her crime?
She whipp'd two female 'prentices to death,
And hid them in the coal-hole. For her mind
Shaped strictest plans of discipline. Sage schemes!
Such as Lycurgus taught, when at the shrine
Of the Orthyan Goddess he bade flog
The little Spartans; such as erst chastised
Our Milton when at College. For this act
Did Brownrigg swing. Harsh laws; but time shall come,
When France shall reign, and laws be all repeal'd!

The following is Mr. Southey's

INSCRIPTION

For the Apartment in Chepstow Castle, where Henry Marten, the Regicide, was imprisoned Thirty Years.

For thirty years secluded from mankind
Here Marten linger'd. Often have these walls

Echoed his footsteps, as with even tread
He paced around his prison: not to him
Did nature's fair varieties exist;
He never saw the sun's delightful beams,
Save when through yon high bars he pour'd a sad
And broken splendour. Dost thou ask his crime?
He had rebell'd against the king, and sat
In judgment on him; for his ardent mind
Shaped goodliest plans of happiness on earth,
And peace and liberty. Wild dreams, but such
As Plato loved; such as with holy zeal
Our Milton worshipp'd. Blessed hopes! awhile
From man withheld, even to the latter days
When CHRIST shall come, and all things be fulfilled.

"The Loves of the Triangles," a keen satire on Dr. Darwin's "Loves of the Plants," and a humorous pasquinade directed, as usual, against the reformers, we do not introduce into our memoirs because it was not exclusively the production of Mr. Canning, and it would be difficult to mark the portions which he had a right to claim. Besides, it is adapted only to readers of a certain class, and would not be perused with the slightest interest, except by them. The following extract, as a specimen of the felicity with which the parody is executed, must suffice.

THE LOVES OF THE TRIANGLES.

A Mathematical and Philosophical Poem; inscribed to Dr. Darwin. By Mr. Higgins of St. Mary Axe.

Argument.

Warning to the profane not to approach—Nymphs and deities of mathematical mythology—Cyclois, of a pensive turn—Pendulums, on the contrary, playful, and why—Sentimental

union of the Naiads and Hydrostatics—Marriage of Euclid and Algebra—Pulley, the emblem of Mechanics—Optics, of a licentious disposition, distinguished by her telescope and green spectacles—Hyde-Park gate on a Sunday morning—Cockneys—Coaches—Didactic poetry—Nonsensia—Love delights in angles or corners—Theory of fluxions explained—Trochais, the nymph of the wheel—Smoke-jack described—Personification of elementary or culinary fire—Little Jack Horner—Story of Cinderella.

Stay your rude steps, or ere your feet invade
The muses' haunts, ye sons of war and trade!*
Nor you, ye legion fiends of church and law,
Pollute these pages with unhallow'd paw*!
Debased, corrupted, groveling and confined,
No definitions † touch your senseless mind;
To you, no postulates ‡ prefer their claim,
No ardent axioms § your dull souls inflame;
For you no tangents || touch, no angles meet,
No circles ¶ join in osculation** sweet!

---

* Imitated from the introductory couplet to the Economy of Vegetation:

"Stay your rude steps, whose throbbing breasts infold
The legion fiends of glory and of gold."

This sentiment is here expanded into four lines.

† Definition—A distinct notion explaining the genesis of a thing.—Wolfius.

‡ Postulate—A self-evident proposition.

§ Axiom—An indemonstrable truth.

|| Tangents—So called from touching, because they touch circles, and never cut them.

¶ Circles—See Chambers's Dictionary, article *Circle*.

** Osculation—For the Os-culation, or kissing of circles and other curves, see Huygens, who has veiled this delicate and inflammatory subject in the decent obscurity of a learned language.

For me, ye cissoids*, round my temples bend
Your wandering curves; ye conchoids†, extend;
Let playful pendules quick vibration feel,
While silent cyclois rests upon her wheel;
Let hydrostatics‡, simpering as they go,
Lead the light naiads on fantastic toe;
Let shrill acoustics§ tune the tiny lyre;
With Euclid sage fair Algebra‖ conspire;
The' obedient pulley¶ strong mechanics ply,
And wanton optics roll the melting eye!

I see the fair fantastic forms appear,
The flaunting drapery, and the languid leer;

---

* Cissois—A curve supposed to resemble the sprig of ivy, from which it has its name, and therefore peculiarly adapted to poetry.

† Conchois, or Conchylis—a most beautiful and picturesque curve; it bears a fanciful resemblance to a conch shell. The conchois is capable of infinite extension, and presents a striking analogy between the animal and mathematical creation. Every individual of this species, containing within itself a series of young conchoids for several generations, in the same manner as the aphides, and other insect tribes, are observed to do.

‡ Hydrostatics—Water has been supposed, by several of our philosophers, to be capable of the passion of love.—Some later experiments appear to favour this idea.—Water, when pressed by a moderate degree of heat, has been observed to simper, or simmer (as it is more usually called).—The same does not hold true of any other element.

§ Acoustics—The doctrine or theory of sound.

‖ Euclid and Algebra—The loves and nuptials of these two interesting personages forming a considerable episode in the third canto, are purposely omitted here.

¶ Pulley—So called from our Saxon word pull, signifying to pull or draw.

Fair sylphish forms *, who, tall, erect, and slim,
Dart the keen glance, and stretch the length of limb;
To viewless harpings weave the meanless dance,
Wave the gay wreath, and titter as they prance.

Such rich confusion † charms the ravish'd sight,
When vernal Sabbaths to the Park invite.
Mounts the thick dust, the coaches crowd along,
Presses round Grosvenor-gate the' impatient throng;
White-muslin'd misses and mammas are seen
Link'd with gay cockneys, glittering o'er the green:
The rising breeze unnumber'd charms displays,
And the tight ankle strikes the' astonish'd gaze.

But chief, thou nurse of the didactic muse,
Divine Nonsensia! all thy soul infuse;
The charms of secants and of tangents tell,
How loves and graces in an angle ‡ dwell;
How slow progressive points § protract the line,
As pendent spiders spin the filmy twine;

---

* Fair sylphish forms—Vide modern prints of nymphs and shepherds dancing to nothing at all.

† Such rich confusion—Imitated from the following genteel and sprightly lines in the first canto of the Loves of the Plants:

So bright, its folding canopy withdrawn,
Glides the gilt landau o'er the velvet lawn,
Of beaux and belles displays the glittering throng,
And soft airs fan them as they glide along.

‡ Angle—Gratus Puellæ risus ab Angulo.—Hor.

§ How slow progressive points—The author has reserved the picturesque imagery which the theory of fluxions naturally suggested for his algebraic garden; where the fluents are described as rolling with an even current between a margin of curves of the higher order, over a pebbly channel, inlaid with differential calculi.

In the following six lines he has confined himself to a strict explanation of the theory, according to which lines are supposed

How lengthen'd lines, impetuous sweeping round,
Spread the wide plane, and mark its circling bound:

---

to be generated by the motion of points—planes by the lateral motion of lines, and solids from planes, by a similar process. *Quere*, Whether a practical application of this theory would not enable us to account for the genesis, or original formation of space itself, in the same manner in which Dr. Darwin has traced the whole of the organized creation to his six filaments.—Vide Zoonomia. We may conceive the whole of our present universe to have been originally concentered in a single point: we may conceive this primeval point, or punctum saliens of the universe, evolving itself by its own energies, to have moved forwards in a right line, *ad infinitum*, till it grew tired; after which, the right line, which it had generated, would begin to put itself in motion in a lateral direction, describing an area of infinite extent This area, as soon as it became conscious of its own existence, would begin to ascend or descend, according as its specific gravity might determine it, forming an immense solid space filled with vacuum, and capable of containing the present existing universe.

Space being thus obtained, and presenting a suitable nidus, or receptacle for the generation of chaotic matter, an immense deposit of it would gradually be accumulated: after which, the filament of fire being produced in the chaotic mass, by an idiosyncracy, or self-formed habit, analogous to fermentation, explosion would take place—suns would be shot from the central chaos, planets from suns, and satellites from planets. In this state of things, the filament of organization would begin to exert itself in those independent masses, which, in proportion to their bulk, exposed the greatest surface to the action of light and heat. This filament, after an infinite series of ages, would begin to ramify, and its viviparous offspring would diversify their forms and habits, so as to accommodate themselves to the various *incunabula*, which nature had prepared for them. Upon this view of things, it seems highly probable that the first effort of nature terminated in the production of vegetables, and that these being abandoned to their own energies, by degrees de-

How planes, their substance with their motion grown,
Form the huge cube, the cylinder, the cone.

Lo! where the chimney's sooty tube ascends,
The fair Trochais * from the corner bends!
Her coal-black eyes upturn'd, incessant mark
The eddying smoke, quick flame, and volant spark;
Mark with quick ken, where flashing in between
Her much-loved smoke-jack glimmers through the scene;
Mark how his various parts together tend,
Point to one purpose—in one object end:
The spiral grooves in smooth meanders flow,
Drags the long chain, the polish'd axles glow,
While slowly circumvolves the piece of beef below!
The conscious fire † with bickering radiance burns,
Eyes the rich joint, and roasts it as it turns.

---

tached themselves from the surface of the earth, and supplied themselves with wings or feet, according as their different propensities determined them, in favour of aërial and terrestrial existence. Others, by an inherent disposition to society and civilization, and by a stronger effort of volition, would become men. These, in time, would restrict themselves to the use of their hind feet: their tails would gradually rub off, by sitting in their caves or huts, as soon as they arrived at a domesticated state: they would invent language, and the use of fire, with our present and hitherto imperfect system of society. In the meanwhile, the Fuci and Algæ, with the Corallines and Madrepores, would transform themselves into fish, and would gradually populate all the sub-marine portion of the globe.

* Trochais—The nymph of the wheel, supposed to be in love with Smoke Jack.

† The conscious fire—The sylphs and genii of the different elements have a variety of innocent occupations assigned them: those of fire are supposed to divert themselves with writing the name of Kunkel in phosphorus.—See Economy of Vegetation.

"Or mark with shining letters Kunkel's name
In the slow phosphor's self-consuming flame."

So youthful Horner roll'd the roguish eye,
Cull'd the dark plum from out his Christmas pie,
And cried, in self-applause—"How good a boy am I.'

So, the sad victim of domestic spite,
Fair Cinderella, pass'd the wintry night,
In the lone chimney's darksome nook immured,
Her form disfigured, and her charms obscured.
Sudden her god-mother appears in sight,
Lifts the charm'd rod, and chants the mystic rite
The chanted rite the maid attentive hears,
And feels new ear-rings deck her listening ears *,
While 'midst her towering tresses, aptly set,
Shines bright, with quivering glance, the smart aigrette;
Brocaded silks the splendid dress complete,
And the glass slipper grasps her fairy feet.
Six cock-tail'd mice † transport her to the ball,
And liveried lizards wait upon her call.

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* Listening ears—Listening, and therefore peculiarly suited to a pair of diamond ear-rings. See the description of Nebuchadnezzar in his transformed state.

Nor flattery's self can pierce his pendant ears.

In poetical diction a person is said to "breathe the blue air," and to "drink the hoarse wave!"—not that the colour of the sky, or the noise of the water, has any reference to drinking or breathing, but because the poet obtains the advantage of thus describing his subject under a double relation, in the same manner in which material objects present themselves to our different senses at the same time.

† Cock-tail'd mice—Coctilibus Muris. Ovid. There is reason to believe, that the murine, or mouse species, were anciently much more numerous than at the present day. It appears from the sequel of the line, that Semiramis surrounded the city of Babylon with a number of these animals:

Dicitur altam
Coctilibus muris cinxisse Semiramis urbem.

CHAPTER IV.

From the Resignation of Mr. Pitt in 1801 till his Death in 1806, including the most important Speeches of Mr. Canning, and his literary Productions during that Period.

THE union with Ireland, and the growing discontents of the people, were the signals of some great change in the government; and, accordingly, the year 1801 commenced with the resignation of Mr. Pitt, and the retirement of his colleagues from office. At the very moment when the political storm was raging with the utmost violence; when the situation of the country had become critical and alarming beyond any former example; when France assumed her most menacing attitude, and all the nations of Europe were

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It is not easy at present to conjecture with respect to the end, whether of ornament or of defence, which they could be supposed to answer. I should be inclined to believe, that, in this instance, the mice were dead, and that so vast a collection of them must have been furnished by way of tribute, to free the country from these destructive animals. This superabundance of the murine race must have been owing to their immense fecundity, and to the comparatively tardy re-production of the feline species. The traces of this disproportion are to be found in the early history of every country. The ancient laws of Wales estimate a cat at the price of as much corn as would be sufficient to cover her, if she were suspended by the tail with her fore feet touching the ground.—See Howell Dha. In Germany, it is recorded that an army of rats, a larger animal of the Mus tribe, were employed as the ministers of divine vengeance against a feudal tyrant; and the commercial legend of our own Whittington might probably be traced to an equally authentic origin.

crouching at her feet; when famine threatened us at home, and armies and armaments were in active hostility against us abroad; when rebellion was secretly marshalling her hosts in Ireland, and dissatisfaction diffusing itself through all the provinces of the empire; and when, in addition to this, the sovereign was labouring under an indisposition so severe, that he could not exercise the functions of royalty; this was the moment selected by him, who has been so often lauded as "the Pilot that weathered the Storm," for abandoning the helm to underlings in intellect and experience, whose incapacity he despised, and whose administration his personal friends continued to harass, till they actually succeeded in driving them from their post. The ostensible reason assigned by Mr. Pitt for so strange a procedure, at a crisis so perilous, was, his inability as a minister to fulfil his engagements with the Irish catholics, which were understood to embrace their full and perfect political emancipation. This inability he took no pains to conceal arose from the extreme aversion of the monarch to a measure, which would, in his view, compel him to violate the sacred obligations of his coronation oath—an obstacle of which the minister must have been sufficiently aware, before he negociated the union with the catholic leaders, who made emancipation a *sine qua non* in the subsequent arrangements of the government. It is probable the dexterous expedient of getting rid of his promise by a temporary resignation of his office, and retaining his honour by casting the odium of refusal on irresponsible shoulders, suggested itself to him at the very time it was made, while it can scarcely be doubted, that he reckoned upon the grounds of his re-

signation as the means of his restoration to power. In another view, the retirement of Mr. Pitt for a short period was a measure of deep policy. It was now quite apparent that the country was plunged into a situation of difficulty and distress, and that nothing could silence the clamours of the people but a speedy peace. The minister had sagacity enough to perceive, that a peace, however popular, would be but of short duration, as it was neither the interest nor object of Buonaparte to suffer Europe to remain any longer in a state of tranquillity than was necessary, in order to afford him an opportunity of maturing his plans, and carrying aggression and plunder throughout the civilized world. Mr. Pitt, therefore, consigned the negociation of a peace, which he foresaw would cover its authors with disgrace, to other hands; while he confidently anticipated that, with a new war, which all men must justify as the only means of averting the ruin of their country, the universal voice would summon the late minister from his retirement, and place him once more on the summit of power. That the old administration expected by-and-by to be re-established, was rendered almost certain in the public opinion by the circumstance that Mr. Dundas also resigned his numerous offices—an act of self-denial, which the pliant principles of the worthy Scot rendered quite gratuitous, and which could only be accounted for by the conviction that it was, some time or other, intended to subserve his interests.

The new minister, Mr. Addington, entered upon his arduous duties, supported by the good-will and personal esteem of all parties in the house of commons. Mr. Pitt individually rendered him very effi-

cient assistance. This led many to suspect that he was still the principal performer in the drama, though behind the scenes, and that those who occupied the stage, merely spoke and acted as he directed. However this might apply to the ex-premier, it certainly was undeserved by some of his colleagues. Mr. Canning neither kept terms with the new administration, nor affected to conceal the utter contempt with which he regarded them. He neither respected their talents, nor approved of their measures. In their pacific disposition, he fancied he discovered pusillanimity, in their moderation, weakness, and in their oratory the merest drivelling and cant. Mr. Pitt was willing that they should do their work; and Mr. Canning was anxious that their power should cease with their vocation; and lest they might presume to struggle for existence after they had accomplished what Pitt refused to undertake, and Grenville disdained to think of, Canning was ready to drive them from their places. Pitt found him at all times, and under all circumstances, his faithful coadjutor; he was his whipper out as well as his whipper in.

The peace of Amiens was concluded by the new administration, on March the 27th, in the year 1802. In the May following, the definitive treaty was discussed in the house of commons, when an address to his majesty was moved by Mr. Windham, strongly expressive of the sentiments of the late ministry on this ill-fated measure. In this address the language to the throne is sufficiently monitory; and some of its paragraphs breathe a spirit of high dissatisfaction. The peace is in fact condemned, after pledging the house to assist his majesty in performing with uprightness

and punctuality, the engagements into which his majesty had been advised to enter; the address goes on to state, "that it is impossible for us to have seen, without the utmost anxiety and alarm, all the unexampled circumstances which have attended the final conclusion of the present peace: the extensive and important sacrifices, which, without any corresponding concession, this treaty has added to those already made on our part by the preliminary articles: the unlooked-for and immense accession of territory, influence, and power, which it has tacitly confirmed to France; the numerous subjects of clashing interest and unavoidable dispute which it has left entirely unadjusted; and above all, those continued and systematic projects of aggrandizement, of which, in the very moment of peace, we have seen unhappily such undeniable and convincing evidence.

"That, by relinquishing so many sources of prosperity in peace, and so many bulwarks of defence in war; and by renouncing at the same time the advantage and security always hitherto derived from the accustomed renewal of former treaties, the British government has imposed on itself a greater necessity than has ever before existed for measures of increased precaution, and for determinations of unshaken constancy."

The proposition of Mr. Windham was negatived of course, but it disclosed to the men in power the grounds of a formidable opposition. In the ranks of this opposition, Mr. Canning seldom appeared during the first year of its existence. He waited his time, and aimed his blows at a moment and on occasions when they were sure to tell. The cession of Trinidad to

Great Britain by the treaty of peace, and the plan for its more general cultivation by negroes in a state of slavery, alarmed the friends of the abolition of the slave trade; and early in the spring sessions of 1802, Mr. Canning moved the house on the subject. His first motion was a preliminary one, it related to the cultivation of the land of Trinidad, which would require, according to the old system, an immense increase of its slave population; and, if carried into effect, would be very far from contributing to the ultimate abolition of this trade, which was the purport of an address to the throne, voted in 1797. In the course of his speech, Mr. Canning remarked, that, though he did not mean then to enter into the discussion of the question relative to the slave trade, he would just observe, that as often as it had been discussed, he had never heard any one attempt to maintain, that if the trade did not now exist, it ought to be commenced. This brought upon his legs the magnanimous and intrepid GENERAL GASCOIGNE, who had the hardihood to maintain in the face of the world, that "if the slave trade had never existed, viewing as he did the beneficial consequences of it to this country, IT OUGHT TO BE COMMENCED NOW."

Mr. Canning's second motion on the same subject was introduced by a speech remarkable, as indicating to the ministry his dissatisfaction with their general measures, and as disclosing enlarged and liberal views of policy, equally founded on justice and humanity, and worthy of an able and enlightened statesman. He rose and said:—

"Mr. Speaker; circumstances, which I do not think it necessary to trouble the house with explaining, have prevented me

from taking any part in the important discussions which have lately occupied parliament. But although, by these circumstances, and by the feelings arising out of them, I have found myself precluded from expressing, even by my vote, the opinion which I certainly have formed upon the general subject of the treaty of peace; yet, that treaty being once concluded, and having received the sanction of parliament, whatever may be my private opinion of the peace, there is but one duty, for every member of this house, and for every good subject of this kingdom, to endeavour, as far as in him lies, to make the best of the new situation in which the country is placed by it, to turn to the best account the advantages which are left to us; and in that view to push, as far as it is capable of going, the improvement of those valuable acquisitions, which, from among the numerous and brilliant conquests of the war, we have been fortunate enough to be able to retain.

"I do assure the house, that it is with this view, and in this spirit, that I have presumed to solicit their attention to one of those two important acquisitions, the island of Trinidad. I will not deny or disguise that my attention was first and most forcibly drawn to this island, by the connexion which one possible mode of cultivating and improving it necessarily has with a subject upon which I have, in common with a large proportion of the community at large, felt very strongly; I mean the African slave trade; the enormous increase of which, if the whole island of Trinidad should be to be brought into cultivation by imported negroes, must be such as to appal any man who looks at it, and such as must shock this house when it considers its own recorded opinions upon that subject. But though this was the first point of view in which I considered Trinidad, I should do great injustice to the cause which I have undertaken, if I were not to aver, that, in examining into the subject with this view, I have found reason to be convinced full as strongly that the cultivation of Trinidad, in the manner to which I have referred, is not more directly forbidden by the fear of that danger and that shame which would attend the enormous extension of the slave trade, or rather the creation of a new slave trade for this express purpose, than it is by every consideration of the security

of the colonies, and of the true policy of this country, under the present circumstances of the world.

"It will appear from what I have said, that if any gentleman came hither with the expectation of hearing a long discussion on the subject of the slave trade considered by itself, he will find himself, perhaps not disagreeably, mistaken. I have no desire, and it is not at all necessary for my object, to go into any such discussion. All that I wish to prove upon that subject I find already established by much more satisfactory authority than any reasoning of mine could afford, the votes of the house of commons. I shall assume upon this subject nothing but what the house of commons has affirmed and recorded. If any gentleman supposed that it was my intention to depreciate the value, or obstruct the improvement of Trinidad, he is equally mistaken: I wish to improve it more effectually, and to greater advantage than could be done by the old system; I wish only to prevent your throwing away the opportunity of an improvement essential not only to the immediate value of this one acquisition, but to the safety of all your old possessions in the same part of the world. Lastly, sir, if any one could imagine that my object was to create embarrassment to the present administration by the proposition which I am about to submit to you, I know not how I can better refute such an imagination than by declaring, which I confidently and conscientiously do, that had the same opportunity, the same necessity I should rather call it, for discussing the modes of cultivation applicable to a new island in the West Indies, arisen under another administration, under the administration of those who possessed all my confidence, and, exclusively, all my attachment; of those who had the glory of acquiring Trinidad, instead of those who have had the prudence to retain it: I should equally have thought it a duty, unless the subject had been previously taken up by the government or by abler hands than mine, not to let the first session of parliament, after Trinidad had become the property of the British crown, pass away without calling the house to the consideration of some such proposition as I have now the honour to submit to you. I trust this will be deemed a satisfactory answer upon this point. If not, I have no professions to make, I have no-

thing more to add, but that I do feel myself to be discharging my duty, and that, for the discharge of a duty, I presume no apology is required."

After establishing the right of the house to interfere in this question, and showing the necessity of its immediate interference, Mr. Canning proceeds to state the precise object of his motion.

"My object is delay only: I wish to prevent the immediate, and, as I contend, the improvident disposal of the lands of Trinidad, in a manner that must completely frustrate the views of the house of commons, until parliament shall have had an opportunity of examining and discussing the subject. I wish to keep the subject within the power of parliament. I do not propose to you to decide any thing now, one way or the other: I only entreat of you not to suffer it to be made impossible for you to come to the decision which may be right hereafter. I do not touch any thing that exists: I have nothing to do with the slave trade, as far as it is now carried on for the supply of our already subsisting establishments in the West Indies; I have no thought of invading or endangering the vested interests of the West India proprietors: just the contrary; I am persuaded I shall show that what I have to propose is calculated to strengthen and secure them. I entreat gentlemen, therefore, to put out of their minds the abstract question of the slave trade, and all the discussions and feelings which belong to it; I entreat them to consider this question in its true light, as a new question arising out of a new state of things in the colonial world, and as one which it would become us equally to consider, whether the old slave trade were to exist or to be abolished, or to be partially restrained. Whatever may be the fate of the existing slave trade, the question of creating a new slave trade for the cultivation of new land in a new colony, is fit matter for separate discussion; and the question of, whether this be the only, or the best mode of turning the island of Trinidad to good account? is one which it becomes us seriously to investigate, and to investigate now. When grants or sales have taken place, it will be too late. There will then be vested interests to set up, in bar of any decision upon the subject of this new slave trade; or those individuals who vest their property in Trinidad,

in the hopes of the slave trade being confirmed to them, will have to complain that the contract of government is broken. I wish government to keep its faith; I wish the house of commons to preserve its character; and this can only be done by pausing to examine, before Trinidad is hastily put out of their hands.

"The objects of the motion thus defined, there are naturally two distinct branches into which the considerations belonging to it divide themselves. First, how far is the house pledged not to adopt any measure that may tend to create a new slave trade, and how far is the cultivation of Trinidad, in the manner proposed, likely to interfere with those pledges? Secondly, what is the best account to which Trinidad can be turned, in every view of colonial and national policy?' To prove what were the recorded opinions and pledges of the house, Mr. Canning desired that the resolution of the house of commons, of the 2nd of April, 1792, 'That the slave trade ought to be gradually abolished,' should be read; and also the address of that house, of the 6th of April 1797, praying, 'That his majesty would direct such measures to be taken as should (among other things) gradually diminish the necessity, and ultimately lead to the termination of the slave trade;' together with his majesty's gracious answer to that address, 'That he would give directions accordingly.' [They were read accordingly.]—Before he proceeded to comment on votes of the house of commons, it would perhaps be expedient, as there were many members of the house who might not have assisted at the passing of them, shortly to notice their history.—The first of them, the resolution of 1792, was moved by a right hon. friend of his (Mr. Dundas), who was certainly never supposed to be indifferent to the interest of the colonies, or to the utmost practicable extent of colonial cultivation. Yet such was the spirit in which this resolution was conceived, so far was the framer of it from having any view to the laying a new basis for the trade in slaves, by bringing new land into cultivation, that it was expressly stated by him as part of his plan, to appoint a commission to ascertain the losses which actual West India proprietors might sustain from being prevented from bringing uncleared land, already their private property, into cultivation; so strictly was it intended to guard against any increase of the slave trade by an increase of cultiva-

tion. The address of 1797 was as little the fruit of enthusiasm and wild speculation: it was moved by an hon. friend of his, now near him (Mr. Charles Ellis), himself a West India proprietor, and acting in this instance, as he was sure his hon. friend would readily acknowledge, as the representative and organ of the whole body of West India proprietors in parliament. The object of this address was, to give to parliament and the country the assurance that the West Indians themselves laid claim to the continuance of the slave trade only till such time as they should be able to continue their cultivation on the then existing scale without it; not to increase the slave trade beyond its actual bounds, still less to uphold the principles or defend the justice of it; but, on the contrary, to give a pledge of their desire gradually to diminish, and ultimately to abolish it, whenever that could be done consistently with those vested interests which they conceived to be guarantied to them by the faith of parliament and of the country. Such was the object of that address; and the benevolence and ingenuousness of the character of him whom they selected to bring it forward, were undoubtedly the best securities that could be offered to the house for the sincerity of those who promoted and those who concurred in it.—I appeal, then, to my hon. friend (said Mr. Canning), whether or not, on the principle of the address which he then moved, he does not feel himself bound, and not himself only, but all those whose sentiments he spoke, and all whose concurrence he obtained on that occasion, to vote in support of a measure, the object of which is not only strictly conformable to the spirit, but falls much within the letter of his address; which goes not even to diminish the old slave trade, but to prevent a fresh one from being instituted, more enormous in its extent, and more aggravated in its evils? I appeal to those moderate men who supported that address of my hon. friend, and the resolution of 1792, which I before referred to, who hailed that proposition (the resolution of 1792) as the first moderate practical measure which had been brought forward for the sanction of parliament, as equally remote from enthusiasm on the one hand, and from a cold-blooded, hard-hearted approbation of a trade, 'to the horrors of which,' as they emphati-

cally said, 'no words could add;' on the other hand,—I appeal to them whether they can withhold their assent,—I desire them to tell to me on what principle they can withhold it,—from a proposition, which is moderate even in comparison with their moderation; which does not injure a hair of the head of the existing slave trade, leaves it to be abolished as gradually as they please, but only prevents a new and rival slave trade from arising, to cross and blast their benevolent intentions. I appeal particularly to those among them who, when the period at which the slave trade was to be made to cease altogether was under consideration, voted either for the year 1796, which was carried, or the year 1800, the longest period to which any man then ventured to propose prolonging its existence; with what face they can stand up and defend a plan for cultivating a new island with new importations; a plan which must make the beginning of the nineteenth century, not the period of the extinction of the slave trade, as they fondly voted it, but the era of its revival, of its new birth, the date from which its warmest and most anxious admirers may cease to fear for its mortality or decay.

"I have said, that the motion which I have to propose goes on different grounds from any other that has heretofore been submitted to the deliberation of parliament. It certainly sets out with great difference of circumstances in this respect—that if there be consistency in man, those persons who have been the most violent opponents of every former measure for the restriction of the slave trade are bound to support this; the moderate men, and the West Indians. To the West Indians, indeed, I have still other arguments to address,—those of their interest, which are manifestly in my favour; but for the present I am contented to appeal to their consistency. There remain, then, but two classes of persons from which I could apprehend any difference of opinion: the first a small, I hope, and select class, those who admire the slave trade for itself, who deem of it, as Cicero did of virtue, that it requires only to be looked at to be beloved.—'Quæ si videretur incredibilem amorem excitaret sui.' With men holding that opinion I can have no argument. It requires a degree of fellow-feeling to be able even to

differ in discussion to any purpose. One must settle at what point the difference begins; but such persons must have their minds altogether so differently constituted, their sentiments, affections, and passions must be so unlike any thing that I can conceive, that I avow my incapacity to understand them, and my despair of making them understand me. To their opposition, therefore, I must make up my mind; but I trust to theirs only. —The other class to which I have alluded is one whose opposition I should be concerned to have to encounter; that of those with whom from the beginning I have cordially agreed in opinion respecting the necessity of abolishing the slave trade. I trust it will not be felt by such persons, that the proposition which I offer, because a modified is an unsatisfactory one. I know that in minds of a sanguine cast such a feeling is sometimes apt to prevail; that partially to redress a grievance is often erroneously conceived and represented as giving sanction and establishment to all that part which you leave as you found it; and that this feeling is sometimes even carried so far as to rejoice in any increase of the grievance, from the notion that it must ensure and accelerate the total remedy. But this doctrine is surely to be received with some qualification. First, indeed, it may possibly be true, where those who are to bear the ill, and those who are to administer the remedy, are the same persons. Then I can understand an enthusiastic observer saying of those who are labouring under oppression, from which they might free themselves, but will not, 'I am glad that they are made to feel still more; grind them harder still, and let us see if they will at length be roused to resistance.' But is this the sort of case which we are now to consider? Is this the road by which alone we look to arrive at a remedy? God forbid! There is yet another consideration; that of degree. If the augmentation of evil would accelerate the remedy in such a degree as that the proportion of evil incurred in the whole would be less than if you had acquiesced in partial redress, at the risk of leaving what was unredressed to last the longer, there might be some ground for rejecting partial measures; but is not this at best a hazardous experiment?—and may not the augmentation of the evil be so great, in the first instance, as that no man would be justified in consenting to it on so precarious a hope of ultimately

hastening the remedy. Let us see then what is the degree of increase to the slave trade which will be occasioned by bringing Trinidad into cultivation, according to the plan in the papers on your table."

The right hon. gentleman here entered into a statement from the papers before the house, of the quantity of land remaining to be cultivated in Trinidad; in order to form some estimate of the number of negroes that would be required to render it productive. From this statement, and from a correct view of what had been necessary for the cultivation of Jamaica, reasoning from analogy, he assumed one million of negroes as the lowest amount that would be to be imported from Africa, before Trinidad was as effectually cleared and cultivated as Jamaica. Mr. Canning then added,

"One million of human beings to be swept from the face of the earth! And for what purpose?—to gratify what interest?—to comply with what necessity? There was no pretence of necessity; and the interests which had in all former instances been associated with the continuance and extension of the slave trade, in this instance were entirely the other way; he meant the interests of the established West India planters.

"He had before said, that if he failed in his appeal to the consistency of the West Indians, who brought forward the address of 1797, he could successfully appeal to their interests. But he would not suppose that he had failed; he believed, he might say he knew them to be ready to redeem their pledge, to stand the test of that day's vote. He would, therefore, direct his argument respecting their interests, not to them, but to those gentlemen unconnected with the West Indies themselves, who had yet always made West Indian interests the plea and pretence for their votes in favour of the slave trade. This day afforded a test of their sincerity also. Was it indeed true, that they had always hitherto been compelled to give a reluctant consent to the continuance of the slave trade, only because they felt them-

selves bound in justice to take care that the vested interests of the colonists should receive no injury by a hasty abolition? Did they endure an evil they abhorred, only because its continuance was indispensably necessary for the protection of an interest which they regarded? What then would be their plea now? now that the interests of the established West Indian was to be prejudiced by the very same act that created an enormous extension of the evil? now that the only effect of increasing the slave trade by the cultivation of Trinidad would be, to raise up rival establishments to meet the old colonists in the market? But, perhaps, such a rivalry was rendered peculiarly desirable by some change which had taken place in the state of the market at home and abroad, by some dearth of West Indian produce, which must be remedied, by some sudden inflammation of West Indian prices, which must be reduced by the necessity of raising a revenue from sugar beyond what it at present afforded. These would indeed be poor justifications for the abandonment of principles so broadly stated, and for the forfeiture of pledges so solemnly recorded. But what was the fact? Precisely the reverse in every particular. The quantity of West Indian produce in the home market far beyond the demand; the markets of Europe shut against us; the prices, in consequence, so low as to be almost ruinous to the planter; and the duties so far from being likely to flow into the exchequer in greater amount, that they were now obliged to be bonded. He did not mean to say, that all this might not change and right itself in time; that the markets of Europe might not re-open, the glut find vent, and the prices rise; but he applied his argument to the now state of things, to the existing interests of the present race of West Indians, of those whose immediate interests had always been found powerful enough with the house to defeat all measures for the diminution of the slave trade; and he must ask, when those same interests were found in opposition to the increase of that evil, by what arguments they were to be prevented from having the same effect? Would you increase the slave trade, would you prejudice the West Indian interest, in order to feed a market already glutted, to lower prices already ruinous to the seller, and to swell a revenue, which you are already obliged to bond? In truth (said Mr. Canning), there

is now no pretence of interest, none of necessity, in favour of an increased cultivation of West Indian produce, at the price of an increased slave trade. If we consent to the increase of the slave trade for such a purpose at this moment, we do an act not only of voluntary wickedness, but of individual injustice.

"It may be asked of those who have, at different times, rejected the plea of West Indian interest, when urged in favour of the slave trade, how it happens that they now become the advocates of those interests? For this plain reason, that our hostility was always directed against the slave trade, not against the interests connected, or supposed to be connected, with it. And very happy I am, for one, that an opportunity has occurred of putting our sincerity, in this respect, to the test. For myself I can truly say, that if the greatest possible degree of affection and esteem for individuals be a tie of respect and regard for the body to which those individuals belong, there is no body of men to whom I am less likely to feel any thing like personal hostility than the body of West Indian proprietors, as there is none which contains individuals whom I love and value more highly. But when their supposed (or, as I should say, mistaken) interests came in competition with a great moral and political good, I did not give them the preference. True. But when I find them on the same side, shall it not be an additional incitement to me to endeavour to work that good which now involves, not opposes, the interests of that body of men?—Let us now apply the same test to those moderate men, who have hitherto supported the West Indian interest and the slave trade together. As long as they went together, all was well. The slave trade was to be tolerated, because its ally, the West Indian interest, was to be supported. But the alliance is now dissolved: the West Indian interest points one way, the slave trade another. Which will you follow? No disguise; no equivocation now. It is not slave trade *and*, but slave trade *or*, the old West Indian interest that you must support:—slave trade in all its naked charms, without the cloak of a pretended West Indian interest to hide them. If, in this choice, you take that road which leads to the enormous increase of the evil, which you pretended to deplore, and abandon the interests for whose sake alone you pretended, while you deplored, to endure it, what shall be said?

What can be believed, but that your affected tenderness for the colonists was all mere hypocrisy; and that at all times, in all periods of the discussion, while regard for colonial interests was on your lips, the secret devotions of your heart were paid to the slave trade? Or will it be avowed, that at the time when these professions were made, we were, indeed, sincere in intending to act up to them, but that we did not then foresee the temptation to which we should be exposed; that we were prepared for common exertions of forbearance; we could have suffered a corner of an old island to lie waste, without thinking too much of the sacrifice to consistency; but that the present temptation is beyond our strength; the fine black mould and watered savannahs of Trinidad hold out incitements, which flesh and blood cannot resist, and almost justify a breach of our bond, of which flesh and blood, God knows to what amount, must pay the penalty? Sir, I consider the acquisition of Trinidad in a different light. It seems to me as if Providence had determined to put to the trial our boasts of speculati[illegible] beneficence and intended humanity, by putting into our [illegible] colony, where, if we pursue our old course, it must [illegible] purely for its own sake, without the old inducements or [illegible] apology. This day is a day of tests: I trust we sh[illegible] abide the trial.

"He now came to consider the second [illegible] of the subject. In a wider view, and considered as in [illegible] to the general security and stability of our colonial sys[illegible], and to the national policy of the country, how far would it be prudent to convert Trinidad at once into a sugar colony, to be cultivated by the same means with the others, subject to the same dangers, and partaking of the same weakness and insecurity? Was it possible to look at the present state of the colonial world without feeling considerable awe and apprehension? The struggle now subsisting in St. Domingo, whichever way it might terminate, could not but be productive of great evil and danger to our colonies; in the one event a great moral danger, if the negroes should not be thoroughly subdued; in the other case, of complete success to the French arms, a great military danger. In either of these events, what was the use to which it would be most desirable to have turned our new acquisition? Would the moral danger be best guarded against by having established

a new negro colony, by immense importations from Africa? Would the military safety of Trinidad be best ascertained by a population from which, in the time of attack, you would have as much to dread as from the enemy; a population which, while you defended it with one hand, you must keep down with the other? He would not dwell upon these topics, because he was aware that they were too delicate to be agitated much at large in public discussion. But enough surely appeared to any reasoning mind, on the first glance at the present situation and prospects of the West Indies, to prove beyond doubt, that strength, not sugar,—that to fence and support, not to extend, with proportionate extension of weakness, our possessions in that quarter of the globe, was the obvious dictate of policy, was equally necessary for the preservation of the colonies, whether to themselves or to the mother country. In Trinidad, therefore, above all things, we ought to look for strength and solidity; we ought to make it, in the first instance, a strong military post, a naval station, a place of recruit and refreshment for our fleets and armies. It ought to be used not as a new venture upon a speculation already hazardous and overloaded, but to protect and ensure those which we have already at stake. Wealth, to be sure, was strength to a certain degree, inasmuch as it furnished the means of exertion; but to protect the existing sources of the wealth which we now enjoy was the first object, to widen the channel in which it was to flow might be a proper and desirable object hereafter. Strength once established, wealth would naturally follow; but if, with a blind and mistaken cupidity, we hurried on to increase the produce of our colonies, without previously adding to their security, the result might very probably be, to lose even that of which we are already in possession.

"If, in looking to the state of the colonies a few years ago, and foreseeing the dangers to which they are now exposed, one had been to form a wish for that which should be most essential to their preservation, he knew not what more he could have desired than that which now the chance of war had thrown into their hands; an island, such as Trinidad, fertile in its soil, with opportunity of naval station, and so situated in respect to the other colonies, as to afford, under most circumstances, the means

of quick succour and assistance; and, above all, not so far gone in the old slave trade system, but that a new mode of colonization might be tried there with fair probability of success. Had he formed such a wish, and had any person less confident in the wisdom of parliament than he was, remarked to him at the time, 'You shall have what you desire; an island precisely such as you describe shall fall into your hands; but, mark my words, no sooner will you be in possession of it, than all your fine schemes of wholesome colonization will be abandoned; you will turn to your commercial dictionary, and there finding, under the head West India Island, the word sugar, and under sugar the word slave, you will look no farther; sugar cultivation and slave trade will comprise the whole of your boasted policy, and Trinidad will be cleared and cultivated by labour from Africa, like all your other settlements, and brought, as quickly as possible, to the same state of wealth and of weakness that belongs to them.' Had any man ventured to predict that such would be the only use to which an acquisition like Trinidad would be converted, he should have resented the insinuation as utterly unfounded. He should have abjured for parliament, and for the government of the country, so poor and vulgar a notion of policy as that of, under all the changes of moral and political circumstances, pursuing exactly the same system of colonial establishment, without reference to what might be required for new security under increased danger. 'Government,' he should have said, 'will not be blind to the new circumstances of the colonies and of the world. They will see that internal strength is that which is wanting to their colonial system. They will endeavour to procure it by laying the basis, in their new colony, of a natural population, which is alone the great cure for all the evils that are suffered, and all that are apprehended in that quarter of the world.' This was what he should have ventured to undertake for on the part of any government of this country; and this was what he now called upon the house of commons to do their part towards performing, by interposing to prevent an immediate alienation of the lands of Trinidad.

"If he were to be asked by what means he thought a natural population could be procured, he would answer, first, by not introducing an artificial one; by not pouring the population of

Africa into the forests and morasses of Trinidad, to perish yearly, and yearly to be supplied by fresh importations. This system once adopted, it was hopeless to look for any other. Keep clear of this, and it was possible that the foundation of another system might be laid. The second means were also negative. Do not make large grants or sales to great capitalists. Look for your settlers among classes of men who will be induced to become residents in the island. Such might be to be found among the meritorious soldiers of regiments on West India service, among foreign corps, among free blacks and creoles in the other islands; to all of whom encouragement should be held out by grants of land, such as would enable them to subsist themselves and their families in a state of moderate independence. If it were objected that European labour was altogether incompetent to the climate; he answered, for the cultivation of the great staple commodities of West Indian produce, certainly; but not for raising vegetables; not for breeding cattle; modes of agriculture, which might make Trinidad the source of health and comfort to the soldiers and sailors of Great Britain employed in the defence of the West Indies, and, in some measure, to the colonies themselves.

"But neither were these all the materials for settling the island. There were, if he was not much misinformed, other materials peculiar to Trinidad. There was a race of labourers in the habit of resorting annually to that island from the neighbouring continent, to work for hire in the most arduous and fatiguing branches of colonial husbandry. They were called Peons; stout, active, inured to the climate, and capable (as was supposed) of being induced, by proper encouragement, to come over in still more considerable numbers; and, no doubt, if proper means of subsistence were afforded them, to settle themselves and their families in Trinidad. From this race might be created a hardy native militia, fitted, to a degree that European constitutions perhaps hardly ever attain, to endure the fatigue and difficulties of West Indian warfare. The right hon. gentlemen below him (the ministers) had better means than he could be supposed to have, of knowing how far the description which he had been giving of these persons was correct; but he had no doubt of it, and if true, there was a basis for creole coloni-

zation, which he should be extremely sorry not to have tried to the fullest extent. The advantages to be derived from it, under certain possible circumstances in the political state of South America, were incalculable; but such as in this place it would not be proper to dwell upon in detail.—There was, besides, another race peculiar (he believed) at this moment to Trinidad, native Indians, to the number (according to the papers upon the table) of about one thousand; a people whom, if it were from no better motive than curiosity, he should be sorry not to have carefully preserved, *reliquiæ et danaum*, the remnant of nations among whom the sword, and the spit, and the rack, and the mine, had made such horrible ravages. These whom, by some unaccountable oversight, the Spaniards had neglected to exterminate, might, and would no doubt keep an increasing native population. One thousand, to be sure, was not a great number; but it was not contemptible, as a source of colonial inhabitancy: it was as large as the number of whites on some of the smaller islands, it was one-seventh part of the whole population of Trinidad (exclusive of negro slaves) when the island came into our possession, and it bore a proportion of almost one-seventieth part to the whole European population of all our islands put together. Add to this, that the numbers of the sexes were pretty equal (the females rather the more numerous), and there was little reason to apprehend that this race might not be kept up and extended to a very considerable degree.

"Now, sir (said Mr. Canning), I do not say here is your colony established: but I do say, here are means and chances for the establishment of a guiltless, bloodless colony, which it would be highly perverse and criminal to throw away untried, from a blind preference to the old method of annual importation from Africa, with such accumulation of misery, and such risk of mischief as must attend them. Let me not be answered that all experience is against me; that there is no instance of a West India island having been cultivated except by negro slaves. I will not too hastily believe that there is any region in the earth on which Providence has laid that heavy interdiction, that it shall not suffice to produce its own inhabitancy, that it cannot be fertilized except by the blood of victims from another quarter of the globe. I deny the fact, that expe-

rience is against me. Has the experiment of a native population ever yet been tried, and failed? Never. Try it now—try it before you make its impracticability a plea for establishing a system of guilt and rapine, which, even if every other resource should fail, is detestable; and if it has not that excuse, if it is not tried in the last resort, is as wanton as it is shocking to humanity. That in this way you will not get as large a produce of sugar to swell the custom-house entries of the next few years, I grant you. But are you to raise a sum of money, or to found a colony? Would you lay a foundation for the returns of a twelvemonth, or for the greatness of an age? I hope, the latter. Nor, however, will Trinidad yield nothing in the mean time. Many of the means, which I have pointed out, are applicable to raising colonial produce in its common acceptation. But Trinidad has yet other facilities which make it sufficiently valuable, even if not a hogshead of sugar should be produced, nor the hand of a negro employed upon it. Look at its situation in respect to the Spanish Main. Is it possible that the court of Spain, in making such a cession to us, should not have considered well the policy of its present restrictions on colonial commerce, and of the encouragement to clandestine trade which arises out of them? Is it improbable that the result of such a consideration, aided by the suggestions of the government of this country, should be, to produce a freer intercourse and a more liberal system of commercial regulations; and in such case, what advantages might we not expect from Trinidad becoming the emporium of British and South American commerce? There are yet other advantages, which do not depend on foreign co-operation. It has been matter of constant dispute between the colonists and those who have in this country contended for limitations on the slave trade, whether or not such improvements might be made in the colonial agriculture, as would diminish the necessity for importations of labourers from Africa. The colonists have said, with some justice, that they would be willing and desirous that the fact should be ascertained; but that they cannot afford to hazard a year's returns in trying experiments. Here then is the opportunity of trying them at the expense, not of individuals, but of the public. Who knows what skill and machinery might do to lessen negro labour? The

first consequences to the other colonies would be gradual improvement, by the silent operation of example, without the shock of innovation, or the risk of loss; the further and more enlarged consequences would be, a gradual abolition of the slave trade produced without any other interference, by a gradual diminution of the demand for slaves; a diminution, in a still greater degree, of the great and dangerous disproportion of blacks and whites at present in the islands; a saving of British capital, and an economy of human life. These are not slight advantages, nor would Trinidad be ill employed, if turned to this account only. But this I do not ask you now to decide. I ask you to pause, to allow yourselves time for deliberation. I ask you only not to decide that you will try nothing but slave trade. If in the end you must come to that, if you are determined to do so, should every thing else fail, Africa is always at hand: you can never be too late in your resort to the market for her miserable inhabitants. But you are not justified in resorting to it till you have tried, I do not say all the means I have suggested, but all that wiser and abler men, thinking deeply, and devoting themselves to the subject, can devise; and if tried heartily, depend upon it such means will not fail."

Mr. Canning concluded with saying, "that he had now only to add, by way of explanation of a single paragraph in the address, which he was about to move, that he had been desirous of providing against the only practical objection to which he could conceive his motion to be liable, by excepting from the general prohibition of grants or sales of new lands in Trinidad, such grants as government might wish to be able to make to those inhabitants of the colonies, restored by the late treaty to the French and Batavian republics, who were desirous of remaining under British protection. To them he would leave it open for government to make grants; but to them under condition of not cultivating those grants by negroes imported from Africa. He went on the presumption that they would be allowed, under the stipulations of the treaty, to bring their negroes with them from their present establishments to Trinidad. He would only further observe, that the restriction, which the address went to propose, was only to keep the subject open until parliament should have had an opportunity of considering it fully, and to

ensure that the government should lay it fully before them. He then moved, 'That an humble Address be presented to his majesty, humbly to represent to his majesty, that, in consideration of the great importance of preventing the dangers and mischiefs which must arise from the excessive increase of the importation of negroes from Africa, if such importation should be permitted, without restriction, into the island of Trinidad; and for the purpose of avoiding any colour or pretext, by reason of new grants, to obstruct hereafter any regulations which, to the wisdom of parliament, may, after due investigation and deliberation, seem expedient; his majesty's faithful commons humbly request his majesty, that he will not authorise any grants or sales of new lands in the island of Trinidad, without express condition (under penalty of forfeiting and making void such grants or sales); that no negro to be thenceforth imported from Africa shall be employed on the said lands, until opportunity shall have been afforded to parliament to make such provision as the circumstances of the case may be found to require, for the prohibition, limitation, or regulation, of the importation of negroes from Africa into the said Island:—That his majesty will be graciously pleased to give directions, that there shall be laid before this house, in the next session of parliament, an account of any such conditional grants and sales, as may have been made in the interval; and of the means which have been employed or provided, for enforcing the due observation and performance of the said condition:—And that his majesty will be graciously pleased further to direct, that there shall be laid before this house, so soon as the same can be prepared, such plan of regulations as to his majesty's government may appear most advisable for promoting the cultivation or improvement of the island of Trinidad; in the manner the least likely to interfere with the wish expressed by this house for the gradual diminution, and ultimate termination, of the African slave trade, and the most conducive to the stability and security of the interests of the colonies, and of the West Indian commerce of this kingdom.'"—The motion was lost by carrying the previous question. —*Mr. Canning's Motion respecting the cultivation of the Island of Trinidad, May* 27, 1802.

In the debate in the commons at the opening of the second parliament of the united kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, on the address of thanks to his majesty, Mr. Canning (member for the borough of Tralee) supported that part of the address which referred to the expediency and necessity of our increasing our naval and military establishments. In the wisdom of the ministers he admitted that he placed no great confidence. But while he more than insinuated his conviction of their weakness and incapacity, he took fire at some reflections which Mr. Fox had thrown upon the last administration. The hon. gentleman, Mr. Canning said, seemed desirous of tracing all the difficulties of our situation to that administration.

"He, on the other hand, contended, that the state in which they left the country, on retiring from office, was the reverse of being calamitous. He was ready to go through all the circumstances, point by point, and could scarcely restrain his indignation when it was asserted, that nothing but a desperate effort of patriotism could have induced any other set of gentlemen to succeed them. It was indeed true, that the country was then left involved in an extensive war, and that a war with the neutral powers was then in its commencement; yet, notwithstanding all this, there perhaps was never a situation which afforded more temptation to the wishes or ambition of those who were proposed to succeed them. An armament had already been proposed to meet the exigencies of the neutral war, and to bring it to a successful termination, and that armament effectually and gloriously put an end to it. The same administration had prepared and sent forth the Egyptian expedition, the success of which so materially contributed to the peace. He was very far from wishing to disparage the present ministry; yet it was but justice to say, that they succeeded to office with this great advantage in their favour, that, as the expeditions were crowned with success, they were in a condition to claim the merit of it;

whereas, had they failed, they would not have been liable to any responsibility. As to the finances, he must remark, that all the supplies of the year had been previously provided for, the internal tranquillity was secured, and the remnant of party in a great measure disbanded. He said thus much, in justice to a set of men, to whom there was reason to ascribe the salvation of the country. Nothing could, therefore, be more desirable than the succession obtained by the present ministers. It remained then to consider, what reliance was to be placed on administration for their political conduct since their accession to power. There were only two points which struck him—the neutral war and the peace that they had concluded; but they were left by their predecessors the means of putting an end to the one, and its success naturally led, in its consequences, to the accomplishment of the other. With a view to this question, he would look how this country stood in relation to Russia. We had despatched thither a very able minister; but immediately afterwards we found it a party to the plan of the German indemnities. In a short period, subsequently, Russia showed a disposition to interfere in preventing the annexation of Piedmont to France, and Piedmont was probably lost to the king of Sardinia in consequence of our refusal to join in the Russian interference. Thus far as to our grounds of reliance on ministers for their conduct in the neutral war. He next came to review their merit in concluding the late treaty. It was to be observed, that the house, by approving of that treaty, was not bound to it in all its parts. It had indeed been discussed, but never debated in its terms. The approbation given to it was not on the ground that the terms were advantageous, but on the idea held out that the peace would be durable. If, indeed, he had reason to conclude it would be lasting, he felt no disposition to quarrel with the terms. These were examined, but not canvassed; and the country hailed the event with acclamation, in the hopes that it would be permanent. The disposition of France was then taken upon trust; but how was it now manifested in the present state of Europe? And let it be remembered, that the people might have acted otherwise, if they had known what was to happen. He was willing to agree to any thing which would add strength to the strength of the country; not so, however, to that which

would strengthen rivalship, which would at length be turned against us when matured and invigorated—a rivalship—'qui auctum et reconditum promeret.' France only waited for a favourable opportunity of showing that her emulation was not that of commerce, but extermination; and if it had not burst forth before, it was only because the means were wanting. He wished not to speak against a system of preparation, but must condemn any thing that tended first to lull the people, and afterwards suddenly call upon them for vigorous exertion. He wished at once to excite a steady conduct, a persevering courage, and a disposition to take, not a little and contracted, but a great and comprehensive view of every interesting subject. He was an advocate for our having a ready, productive activity, not only capable of meeting particular emergencies, such as those of Switzerland and Malta, but to meet every danger to which we may be exposed—a vigilant, waking activity, diffusing itself over every part of Europe."—*Debate in the Commons on the Address of Thanks, Nov.* 23, 1802.

In the debate on the army estimates on the eighth of December, Mr. Sheridan delivered one of his most brilliant speeches. Though sufficiently severe on the Pitt administration, the hon. member admitted that the time had arrived when it was absolutely necessary that the country should adopt vigorous means of defence. After a humorous description of the discord which prevailed in the cabinet at the time of the negociation at Lisle, when the ministers acted not merely like men in a boat, rowing different ways, but like men in the boat of a balloon, Mr. Sheridan, in one of those fine bursts of glowing eloquence for which he was distinguished above all other men, thus concludes:—

"Upon this subject I have dwelt the more particularly, because I wish Buonaparte not to mistake the cause of the joy of the people. He should know, that if he commits any act of aggression against them, they are ready to enter singly into the

contest, rather than suffer any attack upon their honour and their independence. I shall proceed no further. I perfectly agree with my hon. friend, that war ought to be avoided, though he does not agree with me on the means best calculated to produce that effect. From any opinion he may express, I never differ but with the greatest reluctance. For him my affection, my esteem, and my attachment are unbounded, and they will end only with my life. But I think an important lesson is to be learnt from the arrogance of Buonaparte. He says he is an instrument in the hands of Providence, an envoy of God: he says he is an instrument in the hands of Providence to restore Switzerland to happiness, and to elevate Italy to splendour and importance. Sir, I think he is an instrument in the hands of Providence to make the English love their constitution better; to cling to it with more fondness; to hang round it with truer tenderness. Every man feels when he returns from France that he is coming from a dungeon to enjoy the light and life of British independence. Sir, whatever abuses exist, we shall still look with pride and pleasure upon the substantial blessings we still enjoy. I believe too, sir, that he is an instrument in the hands of Providence, to make us more liberal in our political differences, and to render us determined with one hand and heart to oppose any aggressions that may be made upon us. If that aggression be made, my hon. friend will, I am sure, agree with me, that we ought to meet it with a spirit worthy of these islands; that we ought to meet it with a conviction of the truth of this assertion, that the country which has achieved such greatness has no retreat in littleness; that if we could be content to abandon every thing, we should find no safety in poverty, no security in abject submission: finally, sir, that we ought to meet it with a fixed determination to perish in the same grave with the honour and independence of the country."

The house was electrified, and in this moment of enthusiasm Mr. Canning rose, and it is not too much to assert that he excelled himself. We give the speech entire.

"I feel, sir, all the disadvantage under which I rise, to claim, for a short time, the attention of the committee, while they are

yet warm with those impressions of admiration and delight which must have been excited in the minds of all who hear me, by the speech just delivered by my hon. friend. And were it not that that speech contained some allusions pointed personally to me, upon which I am particularly anxious to have as early an opportunity as possible of offering a few observations, I should certainly have better consulted my own interest, than to expose myself to a comparison by which I must be so great a sufferer. This consolation, however, I have for the danger and difficulty of the situation in which I stand up to address you (and to me, with the feelings of personal kindness and regard which subsists between my hon. friend and myself, it is no small consolation), that if I am the first to encounter the hazard of so perilous a contrast, I am also the first who have the opportunity of expressing in words, those sentiments which I am persuaded I feel only in common with every man in the house, sentiments, not of satisfaction only, but of thankfulness for the part which my hon. friend has this day taken; a part which he has taken this day not for the first time; for it is surely in the recollection of the house, it is most certainly in the recollection of the country, at how many other periods of public embarrassment and anxiety in the course of the last eventful and tremendous years, my hon. friend, throwing aside all petty distinctions of party feeling, has come forward, often under circumstances of peculiar difficulty, often discouraged, always alone, as the champion of his country's rights and interests, and has rallied the hearts and spirits of the nation. At this time, indeed, such an exertion was peculiarly necessary. Never was a moment at which it was so desirable to recall the attention, and revive the courage of the house, and to present to them a true picture of their situation; of the dangers which impend over us, and of the exertions by which we must be prepared to meet them. I trust we shall now hear no more of those miserable systems, the object of which is, not to rouse us to ward off our ruin, but to reconcile us to submit to it. I trust we shall hear no more of those weak, fallacious, and degrading hopes which have been held out, not to inspirit, but to relax the exertions of the country; hopes founded on the calculation of what the chapter of accidents (as it is called) may produce, to favour our escape from a destruction,

which we are taught that it is in vain to endeavour to resist; hopes founded sometimes on the possibility of Buonaparte's death, before his plans for our subjugation are brought to maturity; sometimes on the probability of changes in France; on the very magnitude of the French empire, which, it seems, affords a sure presage of its downfall (yes, of its downfall, perhaps some century hence, when we may long have made a subordinate part of it!): lastly, hopes of what unknown and unthought-of things time or chance may effect for us, and for the world! O! contemptible substitutes for rational precaution and manly readiness! Time and chance can do nothing for those who will do nothing for themselves! Providence itself (if it were not impious to assign limits to Omnipotence) can scarcely save a people who are not prepared to make a struggle for their own safety. And then, sir, the systems that have been recommended to us! recommended too from high authority, the authority of great abilities, and of popular and respectable names! 'We have nothing to dread from France but a rivalry in commerce,' says the hon. gentleman opposite to me (Mr. Fox). Look round, sir, on the state of the world, and can such an argument, even from such a man, need farther refutation? 'We may be safe and happy, if we will but keep to ourselves,' says an hon. friend of mine (Mr. Wilberforce), of whom I am sure I mean to speak with every profession of that respect and esteem which his character claims; 'if we will abjure the continent; if shut up in our own island, safe within the surrounding impassable barrier of the sea, we confine our attention to objects immediately concerning our own comfort and happiness, and cultivate the acts of peace, unmolesting and unmolested.' True, if unmolested; but these pictures of flowing felicity, these exhortations to inoffensive quiet, do they suit the times to which they are applied? or will not my hon. friend condescend to consider their practical possibility, before he shuts us out from any other chance of safety, but what is to be found in our own disposition to repose? Happy times, indeed, if they ever shall come, when we can realize these dreams of independent and unconnected security, when we can do without any intercourse with the corrupt nations of the continent, wretches whose territories are separated from each other by no other barriers than mountains and rivers,

and who are consequently unfit for any intercourse with a pure insulated people like ourselves! Then shall the din of war never reach our tranquil shores! Then, instead of traversing the boisterous ocean, at the imminent hazard of their lives, our sailors shall be raised, for peaceful purposes, on the margins of duck-ponds, and the towing-paths of canals! But till this millennium does arrive, in God's name, sir, let us look about us! Let us consider the state of the world as it is, not as we fancy it ought to be! Let us not seek to hide from our own eyes, or to diminish in the eyes of those who look to our deliberations for information, the real, imminent, and awful danger which threatens us, from the overgrown power, the insolent spirit, and still more, the implacable hatred of our natural rivals and enemies! Let us not amuse ourselves with vain notions, that our greatness and our happiness, as a nation, are capable of being separated. It is no such thing. The choice is not in our power. We have, as my hon. friend (Mr. Sheridan) has well observed, no refuge in littleness. We must maintain ourselves what we are, or cease to have a political existence worth preserving.

"Such, sir, is the view of our situation, which we are now called upon to take; such the tone and temper in which we must deliberate upon it, if we would deliberate to any purpose. And for recalling us to that tone, for shaming that dangerous and delusive mixture of whining despondency and false security which for the last two or three nights have been gradually gaining the ascendancy in our debates, my hon. friend has my thanks; he has rendered, in so doing, an essential service to his country. His speech, coming from the quarter from which it came, has done incalculable good. Let not my hon. friend suppose I grudge him the merit and the fame which belong to such a display of talents, when I add, that I lament that such a speech did not proceed from the mouth of a minister. Language like his, in the mouths of the administration at this crisis, would, in my opinion, have done more than fleets and armies to ward off the attack of a foreign enemy, and to animate and maintain the spirit and energy of the people; but from that quarter we have looked for such declarations in vain. And this leads me, sir, to that part of my hon. friend's speech, in which, agreeing cordially

as I do in the general sentiment which pervades the whole, I find myself under the necessity of differing from him. He has stated it as a matter of grave imputation against those who, like myself, are ready to vote for every measure of defence and preparation that the minister may think proper to propose, that while we concur in such measures, we do not withhold expressions of distrust or disapprobation of the general conduct and system of policy of those who propose them. It is argued by him and others as if there were something unfair and uncandid in not giving full confidence to the government at the moment when the particular subject of debate is one on which you agree with them. Now, sir, I am, on the contrary, of the opinion which has been so well expressed and so well defended by an hon. friend of mine (Mr. Cartwright), who spoke early in this debate, that it would be much more uncandid and unfair to conceal your general sentiments, at the moment when you are expressing partial approbation. In times of more regular and marshalled party, indeed, all such reserve or qualification is wholly unnecessary. It is understood without explanation, that the general combined sense of those who usually act together either influences their vote upon each particular question (I am not defending the system, I am only stating it); or that if upon any particular question that uniform influence is suspended, the suspension is limited to the occasion, and the general sentiment of partiality or distrust remains unimpaired. Such, sir, was the case with the gentlemen who sit opposite to me (the old Opposition) during the whole of the last war; with this difference indeed, that I do not remember a single instance in which they happened to think the minister right, in which, even in the most perilous moments of external difficulty, or internal disquiet, they, even upon any one occasion, suspended the inveteracy of their parliamentary opposition. But if, now the state of things is changed, if (whether to the advantage or detriment of the country I will not now discuss) the system of regular combination and marshalled parties is at an end; if individuals are called upon to decide upon measures as they arise, on their own individual and conscientious judgments; is it to be imputed as blame to men so judging, and acting conscientiously upon their opinions, that they limit the opinions which they give, to the

occasion which calls for them? and that approving, for instance, of the armament, because they, in their view of the state of the world, think it indispensably necessary, but disapproving of the mode in which that necessity is stated, or rather is not stated to parliament and the country, they avow one of these sentiments as freely as the other? What would gentlemen have? Would they have us do the converse of what we are doing, and disapprove of the armament itself, however necessary it may appear to us, because we cannot approve of the manner in which it has been proposed, or be satisfied with the grounds that have been laid for it? Would they have us do this? This was the conduct of the late Opposition. But I trust there is not a man with whom I have the honour to agree in opinion who would not reject with abhorrence any suggestion to act so dishonourable a part. No, sir, we are not ready, whatever we may think of the counsels by which we have been brought into our present danger; whatever we may think of our chance of being extricated from it by the same counsels; we are not therefore ready to obstruct even those counsels in any thing confessedly directed to that end; we are not therefore ready to deliver our common country defenceless into the possession of an enemy.

"But my hon. friend, taking under his powerful protection a ministry so hardly used as he describes the present ministry to be, complains that the unfairness lies in this; that while the approbation of their measures is specific, the expressions of distrust are vague and general; conveying no distinct accusation, pointed at no particular part of their conduct, and evincing only a fastidious dislike of their persons, not founded on any reasonable objection, nor supported by any intelligible charge. Sir, let others speak for themselves; for myself, I can most confidently say, and had my hon. friend happened to be present on any former night of debate, he would have borne me witness, that not one word personal to the right hon. gentleman below me (the chancellor of the exchequer) or his colleagues has escaped my lips; except indeed a few words on the last night of debate, expressive of the personal good will, and sincere and unaltered regard which I bear to one of them, the noble secretary of state (Lord Hawkesbury); by which expressions I testified, I trust in no niggardly or reluctant manner, the satis-

faction with which I heard from him (and I did hear with real satisfaction) the only speech that any of his majesty's ministers have yet made, in a tone at all suited to the circumstances of the times and of the country. But that I have arraigned the conduct, that I have pointed out what appeared to me to be gross blunders and mismanagement in the policy of the administration in respect to foreign affairs, that I have made no charge, without stating the grounds of it in the best way that I was able, I would appeal to my hon. friend himself, if he had been present in the house, and I do appeal to all those whom I may have had the honour of addressing on those occasions. My argument may have been good, or bad; convincing, or frivolous; my view of the points to which I took the liberty of calling the attention of the house on the first day of the session, may have been just or false; my charges of misconduct well made out, or proved to be unfounded: for this I am no otherwise responsible, than that I spoke nothing but what I was myself honestly persuaded was the truth; and what is more, every thing that I alleged remains to this hour unanswered. But that I did not indulge in random imputations I do most positively affirm. I stated, sir, (but let not the house suppose that I am about to wrong them by going through the particulars of my argument again), I stated my firm persuasion, that by their mismanagement of affairs at the court of Petersburg, ministers had detached the Emperor of Russia from his alliance with Great Britain, and driven him out of the line of policy which he had laid down for himself, into the arms of France; that by refusing to interest themselves for the King of Sardinia, they had lost him Piedmont; that this very refusal had been that which above all other things perhaps had disgusted and alienated the Emperor of Russia; and that they had therefore most ingeniously contrived, at one cast as it were, to throw away the dominions of one ally, and the friendship of another. I stated, that after having made these sacrifices, from fear of France, and in order to avoid any ground of difference with Buonaparte, they had all of a sudden absurdly and unnecessarily departed from this system of policy, such as it was, and by their rash, ill-timed, ill-considered, and ill-supported remonstrance in behalf of Switzerland, had committed the honour of this country with no

other effect than to precipitate and aggravate the misfortunes of the people for whom they interfered; and that the honour of the country so committed had never been redeemed. I stated this, sir, as the *primâ facie* case against the ministers, arising out of circumstances of public notoriety, and such as any man who takes the trouble to read the newspapers of the day could not avoid observing: and I challenged ministers, if they had any unknown circumstance to bring forward in contradiction, or in extenuation, to bring it forward in answer to what I said; but this challenge has never been accepted. Sir, from this silence I did infer, and do infer, that the case is nearly as I have stated it. And I now assert, that by this conduct ministers have not entitled themselves to my general confidence; however, I may not disapprove of particular measures which they or any other men in their situation could not hesitate to adopt in such a state of the world as is now unfortunately before us. But I do also assert still farther, that part, and no small part, of the disadvantageous circumstances of this country does arise from those instances of misconduct in ministers which I have stated; from their having forfeited great advantages of alliance, and having sought opportunities of disgrace; from having conceded without conciliating, and interfered without prevailing; from having adopted a system of insulated policy unwisely in the first instance, departed from it in the second instance (in regard to the affairs of Switzerland), without necessity, and without effect, and retreated to it again discomfited and dishonoured; from having by all these circumstances humbled the dignity, and lowered the tone of the country, and thereby weakened the best and surest defence which any country can have for its honour and security, the respect of its enemies and rivals. Sir, will my hon. friend after this recapitulation, again accuse me of having acted, or (as he seemed to state it) professed to act on a groundless, womanish, fanciful distaste and dislike of his majesty's ministers: or will he not fairly own that if I am founded in my premises, I am justified in the conclusion, I mean in withholding my general confidence from ministers, whom I conceive to have done so ill by the country; and who having contributed to reduce it to the situation in which it lies, do not

appear to me to be the persons best calculated to exalt and to sustain it?

"But a further charge against me by my hon. friend, and that which I was most anxious not to let pass without an immediate answer, is that of my having, in contrast with the demerits and defects of the present administration, brought forward the name of a right hon. gentleman now absent (Mr. Pitt) and drawn invidious distinctions and comparisons between him and his successor in the office of chancellor of the exchequer. Sir, my first answer to this charge is, that I have never done so. If my hon. friend (Mr Sheridan) had been present on the first night of the sessions, when he states this to have been done by me, he would know that I had done no such thing. Neither on that night nor at any other time have I brought forward my right hon. friend's (Mr. Pitt's) name, nor even alluded to his existence; except when I have heard, as on the first night of the session I certainly did hear from the hon. gentleman opposite to me (Mr. Fox) a direct and violent attack on the whole conduct and principles of his administration. Then indeed I did feel it impossible to be silent. I did feel that I should have been the most insensible and most ungrateful of mankind, if (amidst the silence of others much better capable of undertaking his defence) I had not done the little that was in my power to repel an attack at once so unqualified and so unjust. But even the reply which this attack provokes from me, my hon. friend (from misrepresentations made to him I am sure, not from intention) has entirely misrepresented. He represents me to have averred among other things, that the event of the battle off Copenhagen, and that of the campaign in Egypt, were certain beforehand. Sir, I hope I need hardly argue, that I could not advance such an absurdity. What I did say was this: in answer to an assertion often made, and too often suffered to go uncontradicted, that the state in which the late administration left the country was altogether not only deplorable but hopeless; I did take the liberty to point out some hopes and chances, and facilities, which they bequeathed to their successors; and I mentioned particularly the armament for the Baltic, and the expedition to Egypt, not as undertakings certain

of success, but as undertakings which the eventual success had justified, and with regard to which the new administration had this peculiar and remarkable advantage, that if they had both or either of them failed, they (the new administration) would not have been responsible for the failure. The fruits of success were theirs; but not theirs the responsibility for failure. The very terms of this proposition show that I did not, and could not, state success as certain, and failure as impossible. But I did and do state it as a singular facility and good fortune, which probably never attended the outset of any former administration, that they inherited from their predecessors in office all their chances of credit and advantage, while they stood clear of any discredit from reverse and disappointment. I did and do state this circumstance as a complete answer to all the stuff that we have heard about sacrifice in taking office on the one hand, and all the unjust aspersions about flying from difficulty and responsibility on the other. If in this respect the former ministry cannot be justified without detracting something from the exaggerated panegyrics upon their successors, that is not my fault. I did not start the topic; but as often as it is started in my presence, I shall be ready to meet it precisely on the same ground. It is thus only, I say, sir, in pure defence alone against charges directly brought against him, that I have ever even alluded to my right hon. friend. As to bringing forward his name in the way and with the view imputed to me by my hon. friend on the other side of the house, for the purpose of suggesting him back into office, that I confidently affirm I never have done, nor any thing like it; not because I am hypocrite enough to deny or disguise (when challenged to speak my mind) the wish which I entertain in common, as I verily believe, with the greatest part of the public; or my opinion of the absolute necessity of his being where he ought to be; of his filling again that situation which he alone is competent to fill with advantage to the country. I do not pretend to indifference in this point; but I feel and acknowledge that the very sentiments of personal attachment and affection which bind me to him make me an unfit person from whom the declaration of such an opinion should come uncalled for. My testimony could add nothing to the public sense of his merits; but the uncalled-for

obtrusion of it might subject me to imputations of personal views and interest, vulgar imputations to be sure, and such as I am truly sorry my hon. friend over the way, or my hon. friend the attorney-general, should have allowed himself on a former night to adopt and sanction; but such as, though I have something within me (be it pride or conscience) that enables me to treat them with disdain, neither I nor any man in his senses would wilfully go out of his way to incur. I say this to convince my hon. friend, not only that I did not, but that I could not, consistently with these feelings, for the sincerity of which I am sure he will give me credit, originate any such suggestion as he has imputed to me.

"But if I am pushed to the wall, and forced to speak my opinion, I have no disguise nor reservation; I do think that this is a time when the administration of the government ought to be in the ablest and fittest hands; I do not think the hands in which it is now placed answer to that description; I do not pretend to conceal in what quarter I think that fitness most eminently resides; I do not subscribe to the doctrines which have been advanced, that in times like the present the fitness of individuals for their political situation is no part of the consideration to which a member of parliament may fairly turn his attention. I know not a more solemn or important duty that a member of parliament can have to discharge than by giving at fit seasons, a free opinion upon the character and qualities of public men. Away with the cant of 'measures, not men!' the idle supposition that it is the harness and not the horses that draw the chariot along! No, sir, if the comparison must be made, if the distinction must be taken, men are every thing, measures comparatively nothing. I speak, sir, of times of difficulty and danger; of times when systems are shaken, when precedents and general rules of conduct fail. Then it is, that not to this or that measure, however prudently devised, however blameless in execution, but to the energy and character of individuals, a state must be indebted for its salvation. Then it is that kingdoms rise or fall in proportion as they are upheld, not by well-meant endeavours (laudable though they may be), but by commanding, over-awing talents; by able men. And what is the nature of the times in which we live? Look at

France, and see what we have to cope with, and consider what has made her what she is? A man. You will tell me that she was great, and powerful, and formidable, before the date of Buonaparte's government; that he found in her great physical and moral resources; that he had but to turn them to account. True, and he did so. Compare the situation in which he found France with that to which he has raised her. I am no panegyrist of Buonaparte; but I cannot shut my eyes to the superiority of his talents, to the amazing ascendant of his genius. Tell me not of his measures, and his policy. It is his genius, his character, that keeps the world in awe. Sir, to meet, to check, to curb, to stand up against him, we want arms of the same kind. I am far from objecting to the large military establishments which are proposed to you. I vote for them with all my heart. But for the purpose of coping with Buonaparte, one great commanding spirit is worth them all. This is my undisguised opinion. But when I state this opinion thus undisguisedly, is my right hon. friend to be implicated in a charge of prompting what I say? Sir, I wish not to speak of myself; but I must say thus much, we are both above such a suspicion. Such, however, is the charge brought against him, accompanied and aggravated by another not less disgraceful to him, of guiding at a distance, in secresy and irresponsibility, the measures of the government, and thus playing one part of his friends against the other. Of all the imputations to which that right hon. gentleman could be subjected, I confess I did think that of intrigue and cabal the least likely to be preferred against him by any man who has witnessed his public conduct; and least of all, perhaps, by my hon. friend opposite to me, who is a better judge of men than to believe what he says, and whose heart, I am sure, disclaims the accusation at the moment that he is making it. Is there any thing in the life of that right hon. gentleman, is there any thing in the last years of his life, to justify such an accusation? No, sir. Never did young ambition, just struggling into public notice, and aiming at popular favour, labour with half so much earnestness to court reputation, and to conciliate adherents, as my right hon. friend has laboured, since his retreat from office, not to attract but to repel, not to increase the number of his followers, but to dissolve attachment

and to transfer support. And if, whatever have been his endeavours to insulate and individualize himself in political life, he has not been able to succeed wholly even with those who would sacrifice to his wishes every thing but their attachment to him; if with the public he has succeeded not at all, what is the inference? what, but that, retreat and withdraw as much as he will, he must not hope to efface the memory of his past services from the gratitude of his country; he cannot withdraw himself from the following of a nation; he must endure the attachment of a people whom he has saved. For him, therefore, I disdain to answer such a charge as has been made against him. For myself I may be allowed to say, that, for this one plain reason, if for no other, I cannot very fairly allow him to be held answerable for the sentiments which I have uttered, because till the moment in which I uttered them I was myself wholly unconscious of any intention to make any such declaration as I have made: it has been extorted from me. If my right hon. friend had been sitting in his place here beside me, he would have been as unprepared to hear, as I was to pronounce it. But had he been sitting here, called upon as I have been, I would not the less have declared myself as I have done, however the fear of hurting his delicacy might have awed and constrained me But, present or absent, he is no party to what I say.—Thus much, sir, for that part of the charge in which I am coupled with my right hon. friend. The other, that of guiding the administration, it is not for me to answer: but it is one no less grave and serious in itself, and requires a no less distinct and peremptory refutation. And I do trust that his majesty's ministers will feel the strongest anxiety to remove an imputation equally discreditable to him and to themselves. I am confident they will not suffer this night to pass over, without disclaiming in the most unequivocal terms any secret guidance, any over-ruling influence, such as has been, groundlessly I am sure, insinuated against them and him; such as not only his, and their characters, but the constitution of the country itself, is deeply interested in their disclaiming. For, if on the part of my right hon. friend, I think myself entitled to claim that he shall not be loaded with responsibility where he has not power, I would claim no less strenuously on behalf of my country, that

it should not be governed, nor held to be governed, by power, without constitutional responsibility. Sir, this is all that I think it necessary to trouble you with upon those points in my hon. friend's speech, which occasioned my rising to address you. I shall give my vote this night in favour of large military establishments; but I need not detain you with any further statement of the reasons by which that vote is determined."—*Debate on the Army Estimates, Dec.* 8, 1802.

In a subsequent debate on a similar subject, the voting an additional number of seamen, Mr. Canning, while in no measured terms he arraigned the imbecility of ministers, declared his determination to concur in the measure which they had brought before the house. The country, not the administration, demanded his vote, and he cheerfully gave it. He concluded in these words.

"I vote for 10,000 seamen, or any other number that ministers please to ask, not only to enable government to be prepared against any sudden invasion, or any hostile aggression which may be committed by the armaments in France and Holland in any part of the world, against the rights and interests of this country; but farther to enable them to bring at length to a point all the discussions which are at this moment pending between them and the first consul of France. I inquire not, I have no wish to know, on what subjects those discussions turn. It is notorious enough that there are but too many possible grounds for them; that some of the articles of the treaty of Amiens are yet unexecuted, some of them perhaps unexecutable; and that there have been on the part of France acts of insult, violence, and outrage, innumerable, unexampled, intolerable, for which ministers are perfectly justified in demanding reparation and atonement. I ask not for any information at this moment. I express only my confident hope that ministers have asked for this armament, and that they will employ it effectually, to bring to a final settlement all these vexatious and perplexing differences which have already, God knows, been suf-

fered to subsist too long; that they are determined to be trifled with, mocked, and wronged no longer; that they think the country has already suffered enough by delay and irritation; that they will not lay by the means of exertion which they have now acquired, nor let them languish in their hands, until they shall have converted the present ambiguous and feverish repose, which is at once the disgrace and danger of the country, into solid and real peace. This I expect of them. I trust that they, in common with the public, are weary and ashamed of the state in which we have been kept; a state anomalous and undefinable; a state, for which the annals of history afford no precedent, and the vocabulary of politics furnishes no name; a state, not of profound peace, as it was most whimsically and unaccountably described by a right hon. gentleman below me (the chancellor of the exchequer) a few nights ago! but a state neither of peace nor of war; neither of secure rest, nor of honourable or hopeful exertions; peace, if peace it must be called, without tranquillity, without economy, without safety; and subject to all the anxieties, more than all the dangers, and no small part of the expenses of war, without the chance of its advantages, without the consolation of its glories, and without that prospect which war, vigorously conducted, always affords, of leading to a termination in secure, settled, and permanent peace. —This state, I say, I hope ministers are determined by every exertion to change into a definite and durable state of things; by war, if war for that purpose shall be unavoidable; but by firmness, by spirit, by a resolution to be trampled upon no longer, I believe it may be effected; and I believe, if these means had been sooner resorted to, the effect might have been produced long ago. In this confidence, and in the confidence that, when they surrender up an account of the trust which we are now committing to them, they will show us what they have done with it, and satisfy us that they have employed it to the best advantage, I heartily concur in the present vote; but I warn them, that if they should relax their efforts before they have accomplished all that is required of them, if they should come down to parliament with a history that the armament in the hostile ports had, after all, sailed to its avowed destination, and that therefore there is an end of jealousy and preparation

on our part; if they shall attempt to put this fraud and trick upon the country; if they shall no otherwise atone and account for the shock to public confidence and public quiet, which their late message has produced,—unnecessarily; if no other result than that which I am here cautioning them against should be apparent; if, in a word, instead of a complete, honourable, and durable settlement and consolidation of the peace, they shall do no more than restore the country, after this shock, to the same feverish, unwholesome repose from which they roused it; to that slumber which is disturbed by constant alarms, and perpetually recurring horrors and dangers, by which the country is not refreshed and recruited, but exhausted, harassed, and agitated, even more than by war in its worst form; if this should be the end of all our preparations, the produce and reward of all our confidence, I shall then accuse ministers of having disappointed the vote of this night, and abused the trust reposed in them, of having deceived parliament, and betrayed and undone the nation. This, sir, is the meaning of my vote. And with this explanation I heartily concur in the proposition upon your table.—One word only upon a subject which has been introduced into the debate of this night, the persons and characters of those who fill responsible situations in his majesty's service, and their capacity to conduct the affairs of the country in a crisis of such difficulty and danger. Sir, at a moment like the present, I, for one, cannot pause to inquire who are the ministers of the crown. The crown calls upon us for instant help to avert instant danger. This is not a time to consider into what hands the management of what we grant is to be committed. We have no leisure to choose. Awful indeed is the responsibility of those who advise the call that is thus made upon us; and the time of this account must come. But for the present let us give without hesitation all that can be required by the executive government, be it in whose hands it may; trusting that the means which are thus cheerfully furnished to them will be employed in a manner suitable to the importance of the interests at stake, and such as shall deserve the unqualified support which is afforded by parliament, and the zealous and enthusiastic unanimity which pervades all ranks of the people."—*Debate in the Commons on voting an additional Number of Seamen, March* 11, 1803.

In proportion as war began to lower once more upon Europe, the Addingtonian ministry became mournfully conscious of their weakness. Their hearts died within them, and they were seized with panic every time the thunder of Pitt and the satire of Canning were pointed against them. A somewhat appalling message from the throne, relative to certain discussions, which had been carried on with France, but which were just terminated, but too surely indicated the state of discomfiture, in which the administration found itself.

The debate, on this occasion, which was founded on Lord Hawkesbury's motion for an address to his majesty, was very animated; so eager was the public curiosity to hear it, that the strangers' gallery was filled at an early hour, by persons admitted in an unusual manner. In consequence of this, the gentlemen of the press were excluded, and the first day's most interesting discussion is very imperfectly reported. Mr. Canning, after some introductory remarks, said

"In reviewing the causes of the war, as we were now called upon to consider of them, the question of that night appeared to him to be simply this, whether, under the circumstances of the present moment, the war was on our part just and necessary —necessary, unless we were prepared to abandon the plainest and most important interests of the country, (an alternative which he trusted no man could dream of submitting to); and whether, such being the nature and character of the war, the house of commons were prepared to tell his majesty, in the face of the enemy, and in the face of Europe, that they would support him to the utmost of their power in the vindication of the honour of his crown, and the rights and interests of his dominions? This was the single question, and upon this he could not conceive that there could exist any difference of opi-

nion. That the papers on the table involved and suggested many other questions—questions material and important in themselves, and fit to become the subject of grave parliamentary deliberation, he was by no means disposed to deny. Whether too much had not been borne, and too much hazarded by delay; whether ministers had made their stand early enough; whether, if made earlier and in a bolder tone, the enemy might not have been checked in time, and the last extremity possibly avoided; whether the honour of the country had not been compromised by forbearance and concession, and a notion of its humility and readiness to bear injuries and put up with insults suffered to grow up in the mind of the enemy; whether our case had been throughout well argued, and exhibited in its fairest light;—were points upon which, undoubtedly, great difference of opinion might arise; but they were points (in his conception), capable of being completely put out of view in that night's deliberation. Would any man contend, that in a suit at law the justice of a good cause could be vitiated by any mismanagement of the counsel employed to conduct it; or would an upright judge, or an enlightened jury, suffer that consideration to influence their decision? Still less would the person interested in the cause be likely to agree to so perverse a mode of judging, and to insist upon complicating in a single verdict or sentence the questions of, whether his cause was good, and whether his counsel had managed it to the best advantage? The question of that night was, whether our cause be good—whether, upon the point now at issue between us and France, we are in the right, as against Buonaparte?

"As to the point immediately at issue, and upon which the war actually begins, he agreed in the forcible statement of a learned gentleman, who had spoken for the first time that night, and upon the acquisition of whose abilities he congratulated the house (Mr. Dallas), that it was Malta; to which the learned gentleman properly added, Malta, not for its own intrinsic value and importance only, but Malta, as the defence of Egypt against designs, not secretly cherished, but openly and impudently avowed, and the defence, through Egypt, of our empire in the east. To this qualification of the learned gentleman, he would add, Malta not taken by itself, as a single in-

sulated point of discussion (important as it was, from its association with the great interests just described); but Malta, considered as that point upon which the honour of this country was committed, upon which the last stake of its dignity depended; being (as it was) that last point, upon which, after a series of violences, insults and aggressions, more or less injuriously offered, and more or less undisguisedly maintained, the first consul at length, out of patience with all disguise, or moderation, spoke out plainly, declared his will and pleasure, and left us no other alternative than instant submission or open war. 'Malta or war' was the doctrine of Buonaparte. The refusal instantly to evacuate Malta will be considered as the commencement of hostilities, was the less pointed, but not less peremptory or less intelligible comment of the minister Talleyrand. We do not evacuate Malta at the word of command. The other alternative is war. War, therefore, and war for Malta, was not only founded in necessity and justice; but it was just and necessary in a twofold view. It would have been just, necessary, and unavoidable, if nothing else were in contemplation than to guard those interests, of which Malta is the natural outwork; and which, the report of Colonel Sebastiani, the publication of that report in the official gazette of France, and (if after such a manifestation of design any confirmation were necessary) the confirmation of the projects there developed by the direct avowal of the first consul himself, proved to be the objects of constant, hostile meditation with the government of France. Equally just, equally necessary, and equally unavoidable the war would have been, if we were to have considered only the point of honour (and all those consequences, which, to a nation like this, are involved in the maintenance of its honour); if Malta were no otherwise important than as being that on which a peremptory defiance had been thrown out against us, that on which France had thought fit to try our courage, and put our spirit to proof; the last remaining pledge of former glory, fortunately still in our hands, and attempted by France to be extorted from us by menace and insult: the last remaining means of effectual resistance against a general and undisguised system of aggression and violence, against a plan to degrade, to harass, to wear us out by continual agitation;

against a spirit of envious, malignant, unchanged, and incurable hostility.

"The indications of this malignant temper, the proofs of these hostile dispositions and designs, were to be found in every page of the papers laid upon the table. An attempt was made indeed to contend, that however atrocious each particular instance of outrage might be, yet that having suffered each to pass without effectual remonstrance, and substantial redress, at the time of its being committed, ministers had not only precluded themselves from recurring to them to justify their conduct, but had precluded the country itself from citing them in proof of the justice of its cause. To this mode of reasoning he could not subscribe. That in passing over many things, which they did appear to have passed over without any remonstrance at all, that in offering, in other instances, futile and unavailing representations, in accepting insufficient assurances of reparation, and in acquiescing, as had too often been the case, in silent neglect or peremptory refusal, ministers had been guilty of highly blamable misconduct, had disgraced themselves and betrayed the country, (Mr. Canning said), he was as little disposed as any man to deny. and, at a proper time, he should be prepared to argue. But that these neglects or omissions were fatal to the justice of their complaint, that the country could be thereby bound to acquiesce in all that had been done or suffered, nay, that ministers themselves were precluded from recalling, in aid and aggravation of the present immediate cause of war, those prior grievances which would have been and were causes of war, so far as justice was concerned, but which they did not think such as to make war necessary and unavoidable; was a proposition, which he would venture to say, could not be maintained without leading to the inferences, which those who attempted to maintain it would probably be the last to allow. This proposition was maintained by those who were supporters and approvers of the peace of Amiens. Now if it were admitted, as it could not but well be, and had not been denied, that among the instances of outrage and misconduct on the part of France, enumerated in his majesty's declaration, there were many, even within a short space of time after the treaty of Amiens was concluded, nay, some even before that treaty was signed, which

called for atonement; and if it were true, that every such instance ought, in all cases, to have been instantly pushed to redress, and that the refusal of redress would have been in every instance cause of war;—not only the peace of Amiens, which those gentlemen now so tenderly regretted, could not have lasted an hour, but it could never have been made: unless, indeed, what surely no man would be found to avow (though there might not be wanting some perhaps who secretly felt it) the peace of Amiens was made upon the terms, and held upon the tenure, of surrendering all acknowledged and established principles of national independence, all right to repel injury or resent insult, all pretence to sympathise with the interests of our neighbours, or even to watch with jealousy over our own."

After an elaborate argument on the subject of the retention of Malta on more general grounds, Mr. Canning went on to observe,

"There was but one other point respecting Malta upon which he felt it necessary to say a single word. A doubt had been expressed as to the real importance of that island, in the view, and for the purposes, which had been assumed by the government, and by every gentleman who had argued in support of the war; a doubt how far Malta could properly be called the key of Egypt, and of the upper part of the Mediterranean, the rock of defence against all projects against the peace of that part of the world. To this doubt any man, unlearned in military and naval science, could only oppose his own belief, founded, of course, on the authorities which he thought most sufficient, and on the observation of what had passed within the last few years. Foremost in the list of these authorities, it must not be forgotten, was Buonaparte himself. What he appeared so strenuously to covet as a line of approach to the more distant objects of his restless ambition, it was natural for those who were interested in preserving those objects to regard as the best outwork of their defence. Nor was it to be overlooked, that in both the expeditions to Egypt, that which conquered, and that which rescued it, Malta was, as it were, the first stage of their progress, and the first earnest of their success. When Buonaparte sailed to

the conquest of Egypt, the first notice we had of his route, and the first omen of his future victories, was, the occupation of Malta. When that army, which reversed all his victories, and reconquered all his acquisitions, went in pursuit of the glory which Buonaparte's transitory successes had prepared for them—they followed his footsteps; and it was from the rest, refreshment, and recruit, which they obtained at Malta, that they arrived in Egypt, vigorous and healthful, and prepared on their first landing to achieve those wonders, which decided the fate of an enterprise, the splendid events of which, even the history of this country, can scarcely parallel, and the fruits of which it is as much our interest as our duty not to throw away. That the possession of Malta can be a matter of indifference towards the preservation of the security, which those victories acquired us in that quarter of the world, and under the circumstances of the present time, is not easily to be imagined. The importance of Malta upon any general view and scale of things, might, perhaps, not be so certainly appreciated. It has lain out of the road of European warfare for many ages past. But the gigantic schemes of conquest and of empire, projected by the first consul of France, threatened to make the shores of the Mediterranean in modern, as they were in ancient times, the scenes of the most awful and obstinate struggles, and of the most stupendous revolutions in political and military affairs. Interested as Great Britain must necessarily be in the remote, if not the immediate results of those struggles and revolutions, whenever they are attempted, the experience of the last war would surely justify a strong prejudice at least, if not a confirmed opinion, of the importance of a port, the possession of which has enabled us and will no doubt enable us again, to make that field of renewed conflict in the Mediterranean, whenever we are called to act upon it, a field of new triumph and additional military glory to Great Britain. But while he stated thus strongly his persuasion of the importance of Malta, in the present time, and with a view to the events which appeared to be impending, Mr. Canning begged not to be considered as pledging any opinion that the possession of Malta was, therefore, the sole object of the war; that the war was therefore to be carried on, or the peace (whenever peace should be possible) to be made, solely or principally with the

object of retaining Malta to Great Britain. Undoubtedly he should consider the perpetual possession of Malta as very desirable and very advantageous. Undoubtedly Malta did appear to be the best security that could be obtained against dangers immediately menacing some of the most important interests of this country. But he was not one of those who thought that the separate interests of this country were all that we ought to have in our contemplation; or that the war, now that we had been forced into it for them, ought to be conducted, or concluded with a view to them only. He was not one of those who thought that this country could be soundly and lastingly secure by a narrow policy, and a selfish and insulated system. Opinions of that sort had been gaining ground, he was afraid, almost ever since the signing of the peace. They had been brought forward, perhaps, in the first instance, to reconcile the nation to the terms of that peace; they had been encouraged, or, to say the least, had not been sufficiently discouraged, even in that house, because they had a tendency to direct the thoughts of the people from what was passing in the world around them, or to harden their feelings to it, by a persuasion that it was no concern of theirs.

"Much stress has been laid by many gentlemen (said Mr. Canning), in the course of this debate, on the advantages resulting to the country from the peace of Amiens, from the experiment, as it is called, of that peace having been fairly tried. I am not inclined to dispute these assertions. And one advantage I am willing to persuade myself, which will have resulted from the trial of that experiment is, that we shall all feel a conviction henceforward, that a peace of such a sort, and on such a system, is not the peace which suits this country; is not one which can assure to us the real blessings, the substantial security, or the uninterrupted continuance, of a state of peace.

"There are those who have maintained in this house, and especially in the debates which took place before Christmas, when most, or many of those outrages of France, which are now cited by his majesty's ministers (not as causes of war indeed, but in aid and aggravation of the principal cause), were publicly notorious, and were alluded to in debate; there were those who then maintained (and among them were some persons for whose

talents and character I am sure I have the highest respect and regard), that an insulated system of policy, a disclaimer of continental interests, a separation of ourselves from the rest of the world, was the safest and most advisable system on which a country, situated as ours, could act. Any allusions to the course of policy, which had distinguished the most splendid and prosperous periods of our history, any lamentations over the rank which we once held in the world, and the influence which we formerly exercised in the affairs of Europe, were then, I well remember, received with rebuke, as incitements to an unseasonable spirit, and instigations of violence and warfare. Great pains were taken, and many arguments used, to reconcile us to a lot more humble. To be great, it was stated, was not necessarily to be happy. No, sir, I would admit greatness and happiness are not necessarily united, either in a state or an individual. But this is not putting the question fairly. The question is, whether, when they have been long united, they can ever easily be separated, without the hazard of producing either a convulsion, which shall destroy existence, or a decay, which shall slowly undermine it? An individual may be happy without being a king. But when did abdicated royalty retire to lasting security and peaceful contentment? A nation may be prosperous without being great; but when its greatness and prosperity have been long interwoven together, the alternative is no longer within its choice; it cannot resign the one, without risking the sacrifice of the other.

"Sir, we have tried this system, and are now in a state to judge how we like the result of it. We have before us the contrast of two opposite plans of policy; after a century of busy, active, complicated connexions with the powers of Europe, of assistance to their wants, and sympathy with their concerns, which have engaged us in war, no doubt, and subjected us to disquietude and difficulty—we have had eighteen months, or thereabouts, of abstraction from continental interests and alliances, during which we have left Europe to shift for itself, determined on our part to decline all interference, to avoid all contest, and hoping to be respected—or at least (which, perhaps, was in truth our utmost hope) to be let alone. Compare the rank and station to which we raised ourselves by the former

policy, with that to which we have been fast descending during the prevalence of the latter. Weigh the insults which we have borne, the aggressions to which we have been exposed during the short space of eighteen months, against all the causes and provocations of war scattered over the face of the preceding century, and see if the former do not preponderate.

"We have found then (and this is the experiment which I think the peace of Amiens has most fairly proved), that a country, circumstanced as this is, cannot safely abjure a dignified policy, and abdicate its rank among nations. That, with such a country, to be lowly, is not to be sheltered; to be unpresuming, is not necessarily to be safe. In vain we brought our minds to be contented with humble security; in vain did we profess ourselves satisfied to ask no more than that in our humility we should be unmolested—

neque enim miser esse recuso;
Sed precor ut possim tutius esse miser.—

This might be the limit of our wish; but even this modest wish has been denied us. I do not say that the sense of this disappointment, that the conviction daily forcing itself upon our judgment and our feelings that such a system could not last, ought to have precipitated us into war; but I do say, that once engaged in war, from other more pressing causes, these considerations ought to guide us, and I trust they will, both in the conduct of the war itself, and in the conclusion of the peace, which our efforts in that war can alone procure to us. I do trust, that we shall now make up our minds to recur to the ancient and established policy of the nation; and that, taught by the experiment which has been tried (perhaps unavoidably, perhaps necessarily, I give no opinion upon that point; but if to the establishment of a conviction of our true interest, I will agree, fortunately upon the whole), we shall look to conduct, and terminate this contest on larger and higher principles; shall endeavour to link ourselves anew with the system of Europe, from which events had broken us off; and to raise ourselves again to that commanding situation, to that rank and consideration in Europe, which must always furnish, at once, the best chance of not being attacked, and the best means of speedily re-

pelling any attack that may be made upon us."—*Debate on the King's Message relative to the Discussions with France, May* 23, 1803.

On the motion of Mr. Patten for inquiring into the conduct of ministers, which was intended to hold them up to the country as incompetent to their station, and unworthy of confidence, Mr. Pitt proposed a middle course. He admitted, that ministers deserved all the censure which a vote of that house could pass upon them; but contended, that greater mischief was to be apprehended from pushing such an opinion to a parliamentary declaration, than from suffering it to pass by undecided; he, therefore, moved for reading the other orders of the day. Mr. Canning, on this occasion, *and for the first time in his life, by an overruling sense of duty*, felt himself compelled to differ from his right honourable friend. "But let it not, therefore, be imagined (he continued), that in following a different course for myself, I presume to insinuate the smallest blame, to hint a doubt of the propriety of that which, with his view of the subject, he has chosen for himself, and for those who may come, like him, with unpledged opinions to this discussion." He then proceeded,

"For myself, I entertain a full conviction of the truth of every one of the charges which these resolutions contain; and have no hesitation in avowing, that I think the continuance of a blundering and incapable administration, at a crisis like the present, a more certain mischief to the country, than any that can arise from a public declaration by parliament, of its opinion of their incapacity and misconduct. I therefore am perfectly prepared for a decisive vote upon this question. The papers which ministers have laid before parliament exhibit, to my mind, abundant proofs that our affairs

have been grossly mismanaged. The production of these papers appears to me not only to afford the natural opportunity, but to throw down a challenge to all those who have, like myself, expressed a strong presumptive opinion against the conduct of ministers, to repeat or retract that expression now that their conduct is fully before us. And it is, as I think, a challenge which, so situated, we have hardly the option to decline. I consider myself bound, therefore, to comply with the demand of my noble friend, and, much as I lament that one, for whom I feel so much personal regard, is involved in the issue of the decision, I will at least do him the justice which he requires, by voting in the first instance against a proposition, which (however justifiable on the grounds on which it is offered) would prevent that decision, which ministers are entitled to expect on the part of those who are prepared and pledged to come to it."—Mr. Canning then proceeded to take a rapid survey of the resolutions. The first was a mere truism, stating in the words of the declaration itself, the sense which ministers appear, by that declaration, to have entertained of the conduct of France. To this he apprehended no objection could be urged. The second contrasted the conduct which ministers had thought proper to hold, and the language which they had used, and the impressions which they had studiously created throughout the country, with what now appeared to have been all along their own real opinions—a contrast and contradiction not more disgraceful to ministers themselves, than mischievous to the country which had been duped by it.—"Could any man reflect without indignation on the deception and delusion so long practised upon parliament and upon the people? Could any man recall to his mind, without disgust, the canting professions of belief in the continuance of peace and amity, and good-will between this country and France, uttered in that house almost daily, before Christmas, nay, even up to within ten days of the declaration of war, or, what was nearly the same thing, of the king's message—uttered at moments (as it now appeared) when the secret thoughts and internal convictions of ministers were directly at variance with the assertions which they made? Could any man consider the consequences of this system of deceit, and not think some marked censure upon those, who had dared to employ it, absolutely ne-

cessary? Should it be borne that parliament should have been called upon to vote under false pretences? that members should have been sent down among their constituents (as had happened at the Christmas recess) to spread falsehood and error throughout the country; and that the confiding country should have been misled into incorrect and groundless views, and deluded into visionary hopes, only that it might feel more seriously the blow of disappointment? For what purpose could it be that ministers had thought this system of deception, this trick upon the nation, advisable? Was it design?' What possible good could arise from it? Are men better prepared for action when they are roused out of a sleep, and, as they fancy, secure slumber? or was it in sport only that ministers spread these gay delusions? Was it matter of amusement to them to engage the commerce of the country in wide speculations and hazardous enterprises, that they might see how men would look, when a sudden and unexpected check wrested their progress, or prevented their expected returns? or was it sheer ignorance? Did they not know what they were about? Is it their excuse for having duped England, that they were themselves the dupes of France? Had they in their possession, had they before their eyes, and in their minds, those documents which they have now at length put into the hands of parliament, those records of insult, injury, and aggression, sufficient, one should think, to awaken the most sluggish suspicion; and did they suspect nothing of the insecurity of their peace?

"There was but this alternative, either they must have been deceived themselves, or they must wilfully and wantonly, and most audaciously have imposed upon the public; in representing as solid, substantial, and durable, that peace, whose baseless fabric was at that very moment crumbling under their feet — He would not refer to the instances, which had been particularly quoted, to those expressions of the chancellor of the exchequer so rashly hazarded, and now so ingeniously explained. He did not say 'profound peace.' Did he not? The many who thought they heard him must have been wonderfully mistaken; or if he did say, 'profound,' (he might have said it then, it appeared) it was only because 'profound' and 'peace' were so apt to come together. Happy, dignified, and satisfactory explana-

tion! He would not dwell upon this point. He would content himself with expressing his hearty adoption of every word of a resolution, which went to mark with censure, reprobation, and contempt, a system so unworthy of the government of a country like this. The third resolution no man could compare with the papers, and with the avowals extorted from ministers, without feeling a painful conviction of its truth. Not only did it appear, beyond contradiction, that opportunities had been lost, for checking the aggressions of France by timely representation and dignified remonstrance—not only had the grossest insults been passed by without any attempt to obtain reparation, the most flagrant violations of treaty suffered to continue without observation; but it appeared now, from the avowal of the chancellor of the exchequer, that these omissions, on the part of his majesty's government, had been omissions, not of negligence, but of design. They had, it seems, been remiss upon system: they had studiously suffered their wrongs to accumulate; they had diligently noted them, to be sure, as they occurred; and why?—because they thought, in their profound wisdom, the government of Buonaparte entitled to peculiar indulgence! With other governments they would have been all courage and vigilance, all high point of honour and quick resentment of injury. But Buonaparte was not to be bound to common rules! His green and raw usurpation was entitled to privileges and indulgencies which would have been denied to hereditary monarchy, and ancient, recognized, legitimate sway! I am glad that the right hon. gentleman has fairly avowed his system. It is exactly what I have all along suspected it to be. I say, sir, that this is the very error, the fundamental fault, of the system upon which the conduct of our government towards France has been regulated; and, in my conscience, I believe it is to this that we are, in a great measure, to attribute the struggle in which we are now involved. Our stand ought to have been made not on the last insult, but on the first, be it what it might. Unusual indulgence to Buonaparte! He ought to have been watched, and to have known that he was watched with unusual jealousy. The first moment that he outstepped, with regard to this country, the line of respect, of decency, of honourable consideration to which we feel ourselves entitled, he should have been met

with firmness, and plainly given to understand, that it was not so that Great Britain was accustomed to be treated; that she would herself respect a power with whom she had made peace, but that she expected, and would demand, urge, and, if necessary, enforce, equal, reciprocal respect in her turn. Would you then have precipitated the war? In my conscience, I believe, I should have retarded, possibly have prevented it. One insult tamely borne is an invitation to a second. An injury helplessly acquiesced in, is a signal for more! Temperately and steadily opposed in his first attempt upon our interests, or upon our honour, Buonaparte would have hesitated before he tried a second experiment. As it was, he had nothing to deter him. He had every temptation to proceed. He saw plainly enough that he was considered, as the right hon. gentleman now owns he did consider him, as a privileged person—that an untitled usurper was in the eyes of the British ministry a favoured power—and he used his privilege accordingly. I do not wonder at him. I hardly blame him. Flesh and blood—at least a tyrant's flesh and blood—could hardly resist the temptation of trampling upon unresisting imbecility. But for my country I do complain, that its honour has been sacrificed, and its interests trifled with, in a vain and foolish attempt to propitiate violence by submission, and to repel aggression by tameness and indulgence. I do complain, that instead of having taken the best chance of averting war altogether, by a timely notice of our determination to encounter it rather than submit to oppression or to shame, we have ensured the war, such as it now comes upon us, and have gained by our system of forbearance no other advantage than this whining catalogue of unredressed grievances, to which the right hon. gentleman appeals as a proof of his wisdom and moderation, but which I consider as the strongest evidence of weakness and misconduct.—With regard to the fourth resolution, as it had been so unanswerably argued by his right hon. friend (Mr. Grenville), he would not enter into any additional argument. He would content himself with expressing his firm persuasion, that the present ministers were the first statesmen who ever imagined that the most likely way of bringing to a happy conclusion any point upon which they intended to make a stand, was to put previously out of their hands all collateral

means of pressing it to advantage; that when, from the beginning, they were determined to take their stand upon the article of Malta, it did seem to him to be the very height of inconsistency, weakness, and improvidence, not to have turned the possession of the Cape to the obvious advantage of which it was capable, that of making it tell upon the settlement of their other disputes, and specifically upon that of the dispute respecting Malta. "All the evils, whatever they were, attending the recapture of the Cape they had already incurred. They had by this act riveted Holland in the chains of France. But having done this, having ensured all the mischief arising from their own act, that they should wantonly throw away all the possible good, implied a degree of folly utterly irreconcileable with the character and conduct of any ministry, except that whose mistakes and mismanagements were the subject of the resolutions now before the house. This only was wanting to hasten the war, which their previous neglect of their obvious duty, and surrender of the honour of the country, had, perhaps, already rendered unavoidable. It was to throw away the only remaining chance of an adjustment, the only means for the preservation of peace with safety, which their former profuse concessions had left for a moment in their hands. Subscribing, therefore, to the truth of every allegation contained in the resolutions to which he had referred, he could have no hesitation in giving a hearty assent to the resolution, which asserts, that by these instances of misconduct, the ministers had proved themselves unworthy of the confidence of parliament, and incapable of administering the public affairs to advantage, at a crisis of such difficulty and danger. In his conscience he fully subscribed to, and adopted, the averment of this resolution also; and with all the solemnity which he felt to belong to such a declaration, he declared, that he did not think the country safe while the administration of its affairs was suffered to continue in such hands."—*Debate on Mr. Patten's Motion relative to the Conduct of Ministers, June* 3, 1803.

In the April following, on the Irish militia bill, Mr. Canning concluded a short speech by declaring

that "ministers had nothing consistent or uniform in their views. They knew not what they proposed, and they took no effectual means of carrying any of their plans into effect; they were subject to eternal variations of opinion; they never advanced boldly to any object,—

"'They lightly waddled to the end in view.'"

Here the war with Mr. Pitt's sham administration ended, with the exception of two or three skirmishes which resembled the flourishing of trumpets, rather than serious hostility. The enemy was at the feet of the conquerors; and on the 18th of May, 1804, the right hon. William Pitt resumed his station as prime minister, supported by his friend and *protegé*, the right hon. George Canning, as treasurer of the navy.

It was not only within the walls of parliament that Mr. Canning assailed the makers of the peace of Amiens, and defended and eulogized his great patron and friend; he employed his pen in the same cause. "The Pilot that weathered the Storm," a composition which has been praised far beyond its merit, is still roared at Pitt dinners when the company are half seas over; while his satires, which were intolerably caustic when written, have lost much of their point (though none of their venom) from the lapse of time, and the change of circumstances. It is the duty of the biographer to preserve them all, for they elucidate the mental character of their author;—we hope they were more the creatures of the brain than of the heart; and yet they were sufficiently malignant to make their victims the objects of ridicule. To be satirical, and

at the same time amiable, is impossible. A good man will rather suffer injury than inflict it. A party politician is no favourable specimen of human nature. Honourable warfare on the boards of St. Stephen's, is one thing, anonymous satire is another; the former we admire, the latter we detest.

Mr. Addington was designated the doctor, because his father kept a private madhouse in Berkshire. Mr. Hiley Addington is the brother of the premier, for whom, during his administration, he had provided the situation of paymaster. We give three various specimens of Mr. Canning's talents as they occurred, leaving our readers to entertain them as they please.

THE GRAND CONSULTATION.

Ambubaiarum Collegia Pharmacopolæ.—HORACE.

If the health and strength, and the pure vital breath
Of old England, at last, must be *doctor'd* to death,
Oh! why must we die of one doctor alone?
And why must that doctor be just such a one
As Doctor Henry Addington?

Oh! where is the great Doctor Dominicetti,
With his stews and his flues, and his vapours to sweat ye?
O! where is that Prince of all Mountebank fame,
With his baths of hot earth, and his beds of hot name?
Oh! where is Doctor Graham?

Where are Somnambule Mesmer's convulsions magnetic?
Where is Myersbach, renown'd for his pills diuretic?
Where is Perkins, with tractors of magical skill?
Where is the anodyne necklace of Basil Burchell?
Oh! where is the great Van Butchell?

Where's Sangrado Rush, so notorious for *bleedings*?
Where's Rumford, so famed for his writings and readings;

Where 's that Count of the Kettle, that friend to the belly,
So renown'd for transforming old bones into jelly?—
Where, too, is the great Doctor Kelly?

While Sam Solomon's lotion the public absterges,
He gives them his gold * as well as his purges;
But *our* frugal doctor this practice to shun,
Gives his *pills* to the public, the *Pells* to his *Son*.
Oh! fie! fie! Doctor Addington!
Oh! where is Doctor Solomon?

Where are all the great doctors? No longer we want
This farrago of cowardice, cunning, and cant;
These braggarts! that one moment know not what fear is,
And the next moment, trembling, no longer know where is—
Lord Hawkesbury's † march to Paris?

Then for Hobart and Sullivan, Hawkey and Hervey,
For Wallace and Castlereagh, Bleeke and Glenbervie,
For Sergeant, Vansittart, Monkhouse, and Lee,
Give us Velno and Anderson, Locke, Spilsbury,
Doctor Ball, Doctors Brodum and Bree.

And instead of the jack-pudding bluster of Sherry,
With his "dagger of lath," and his speeches so merry ‡!
Let us bring to the field—every foe to appal—
Aldini's galvanic *deceptions*—and all
The *sleight of hand tricks* of Conjuror Val.

So shall Golding and Bond, the Doctor's tall yeomen,
Dame Hiley, Dame Bragge, and the other *old Women*,
For new mountebanks changed, their old tricks bid farewell to,
And the famed d'Ivernois his arithmetic sell to
The wonderful wonder, the great Katterfelto!

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* Vide daily papers: Doctor Solomon's Charitable Subscriptions and Abstergent Lotion.

† Now Lord Liverpool.

‡ See Mr. Gilray's admirable Caricature, entitled "Dramatic Loyalty; or the Patriotic Courage of Sherry Andrew."

So shall England, escaped from her "*safe* politicians,"
Such an army array of her quacks and physicians,
Such lotions and potions, pills, lancets, and leeches,
That Massena shall tremble our coast when he reaches,
And the Consul himself — — —

THE PILOT THAT WEATHER'D THE STORM.

If hush'd the loud whirlwind that ruffled the deep;
The sky, if no longer dark tempests deform;
When our perils are past, shall our gratitude sleep?
No!—Here's to the Pilot that weather'd the storm!

At the footstool of Power let Flattery fawn,
Let Faction her idols extol to the skies;
To Virtue, in humble resentment withdrawn,
Unblamed may the merits of gratitude rise.

And shall not his memory to Britain be dear,
Whose example with envy all nations behold;
A Statesman unbiass'd by int'rest or fear,
By pow'r uncorrupted, untainted by gold?

Who, when terror and doubt through the universe reign'd,
While rapine and treason their standards unfurl'd,
The heart and the hopes of his country maintain'd,
And one kingdom preserved 'midst the wreck of the world.

Unheeding, unthankful, we bask in the blaze,
While the beams of the sun in full majesty shine;
When he sinks into twilight, with fondness we gaze,
And mark the mild lustre that gilds his decline.

Lo! Pitt, when the course of thy greatness is o'er,
Thy talents, thy virtues, we fondly recall!
Now justly we prize thee, when lost we deplore;
Admired in thy zenith, but loved in thy fall!

O! take, then—for dangers by wisdom repell'd,
For evils, by courage and constancy braved—
O take! for a throne by thy counsels upheld,
The thanks of a people thy firmness has saved!

And O! if again the rude whirlwind should rise!
The dawning of Peace should fresh darkness deform,
The regrets of the good, and the fears of the wise,
Shall turn to the Pilot that weather'd the storm!

ODE TO THE "DOCTOR."

How blest, how firm the Statesman stands,
(Him no low intrigue e'er shall move),
Circled by faithful *kindred* bands,
And propp'd by fond *fraternal* love.

When his speeches hobble vilely,
What "*Hear hims*" burst from brother Hiley;
When the faltering periods lag,
Hark to the cheers of brother Bragge.

When the faltering periods lag,
Or his yawning audience flag,
When his speeches hobble vilely,
Or the house receives him drily,
Cheer, O! cheer him, brother Bragge!
Cheer, O! cheer him, brother Hiley!

Each a gentleman at large,
Lodged and fed at public charge,
Paying (with a grace to charm ye)
This the fleet, and that the army.

Brother Bragge and brother Hiley,
Cheer him! when he speaks so vilely,
Cheer him! when his audience flag,
Brother Hiley, brother Bragge.

MODERATE MEN AND MODERATE MEASURES.

Praise to placeless proud ability,
Let the prudent muse disclaim;
And sing the Statesman—all civility—
Whom *moderate talents* raise to fame.

He, no random projects urging,
Make us wild alarms to feel;
With *moderate measures*, gently *purging*
Ills that prey on Britain's weal.

CHORUS.

Gently *purging*,
Gently *purging*,
Gently *purging* Britain's weal *.

Addington, with measured *motion*,
Keep the tenour of thy way;
To glory yield no rash devotion,
Led by luring lights astray;
Splendid talents are deceiving;
Tend to councils much too bold;
Moderate men we prize, believing,
All that glisters is not gold.

GRAND CHORUS.

All that *glisters*,
All that *glisters*,
All that *glisters* is not gold †!

The biographer of Mr. Canning does not feel himself called upon to detail the politics of the day, any farther than they originated with, or were supported by him, develope his principles, or illustrate his talents. The new ministry was not all that he wished; nor did he conceal his chagrin and dissatisfaction; he said publicly, "that with the administration then forming, he was as much disappointed as any man, but he should not relinquish any part he was called on to act, because it might chance to be an arduous one." On his restoration to power, his noblest energies

* Ere human statute purged the general weal.—SHAKSPEARE.
† Nor all that *glisters* gold.—GRAY.

were devoted to the defence of his friend, Viscount Melville, with whom he had formerly acted in the administration, and to whom he was sincerely and warmly attached. His speeches on this occasion, though in every respect worthy of his head and heart, embrace no topics of general interest, and refer to nothing which deserves preservation in the annals of the country. We shall, therefore, pass them by, retaining only the concluding paragraphs of what he delivered on the 10th of April; it was on the motion of Mr. Whitbread, "that a humble address might be presented to his majesty, praying the removal of Lord Melville from all offices held under the crown, and from his majesty's presence and councils for ever." Mr. Canning referring to what Mr. Whitbread had said of his own motives, proceeded:

"The honourable gentleman has disclaimed any other motive for his motion this night, but a view to public justice. What has been already done towards that end? Is the state of humiliation to which the noble lord has been reduced, nothing? Is such an end to such a political life, nothing? Has not the noble lord already suffered quite enough to disarm any set of men, not actuated by the most rancorous feeling of party enmity? And against whom is this enmity directed? Against one who never was himself suspected of deserving the character of a bitter political antagonist. In any of the public situations, which Lord Melville has occupied, I would challenge any man to produce an instance where party prejudice has been found to obstruct, or delay, or influence the promotion of merit, whether political or military.

"Sir, the honourable gentleman has congratulated his country on the extraordinary public virtue which has been manifested on this occasion. If he means the virtue displayed by the house of commons, I cordially agree with him. Whatever I may have presumed to think of the vote of Monday night, as

hasty or premature, no man more heartily than I subscribes to the purity and integrity of the motives which dictated it. If the honourable gentleman means to compliment himself on the part which he has taken, or the part which he this night takes, in urging the house to a rigour beyond the measure of justice, and, I venture to affirm, beyond the measure of its own feelings of what is right; I am far from presuming to deny his claim to that credit, for an exertion of virtue beyond the ordinary rate of most men's capacity, and beyond the usual practice of the country and the times in which we live.

"The honourable gentleman must have gone far back into the times of ancient Greece and Rome, to find models of that sort of virtue. There he will have found, no doubt, that when a great political delinquent was to be brought to justice, and an appeal made to the people, to aggravate the severity of punishment, the accuser was not generally found among those who had received any injury from the accused, but among those whom he had served. And, sir, when I look back to the proceedings of this house in the year 1795, when I recollect the serious charges which were then brought forward against two most eminent commanders, now members of the other house of parliament (and for their services well entitled to that distinction); when I recollect that in the debates which arose upon those charges, their most active defender, their most indefatigable advocate, was that very noble lord who now is made the theme of the honourable gentleman's violence and invective; and when I see that noble lord, now no longer a minister, already pulled down from the high eminence on which he stood, and prostrate at the feet of the house of commons, no longer formidable from power or dangerous from influence; when I see him now, after his political existence has ceased, after the crimes of his political nature (be they what they may) have been severely visited upon him; when I see him now in this defenceless state, persecuted and hunted down,—and by whom? by the friends of Sir John Jervis and the kindred of Sir Charles Grey;—I cannot, sir, refuse to the honourable gentleman the praise of Spartan inflexibility, of more than Roman virtue.—But, while humbly and at a distance I admire the exertion of these high qualities in him, I pray to Almighty God to spare me the pain of being ever called upon to imitate his example!"

Nothing remarkable occurred to bring forward Mr. Canning during the short interval between Lord Melville's impeachment and the death of Mr. Pitt. This event, so utterly unexpected, struck upon the heart of the whole nation. Party forgot its antipathies, the tear of regret started in every eye, and the man who, while he lived, was assailed by the most furious storms of opposition, at his death had not an enemy; not a whisper was breathed to sully his fair fame; but every tongue was loud in its admiration of a minister who, with all the resources of the state at his disposal, had died in absolute poverty. He expired on the 23d January, 1806, and on the first of February a motion was made in the house of commons for the payment of his debts. It was honourable to Mr. Fox, that he distinguished himself as the supporter of this motion. It was, however, no more than might have been expected from a generous opponent, and Mr. Fox, who held the letters patent of his nobility immediately from Almighty God, was one of the noblest of his species. For him to be magnanimous was to be himself.

It is deeply to be regretted that at such a time Mr. Canning should have betrayed an intemperate weakness altogether unworthy of him. We do not love contrasts, when they are at the expense of those we would willingly esteem and reverence. We may excuse Mr. Canning on this occasion, but we cannot commend him. The grave should have buried all political animosities. Mr. Fox could not have pronounced a warmer eulogy on his departed antagonist, without compromising the dignity of his own character. Mr. Canning ought to have proudly exulted

in the final triumph of his illustrious friend, when he received the homage of a rival's tears. We insert the speeches both of Mr. Fox and Mr. Canning.

Mr. Fox said:

"I never felt more satisfaction than in giving my support to this testimony of the consideration of a great and rich nation for the merits of an eminent servant. The mode of introducing it leaves me no difficulty in giving it the support I wished. I rise in consequence of some observations that have fallen from some gentlemen most earnest in support of the motion. Among other expressions, I have heard that of 'Saviour.'

"With respect to this, I must say I retain all my former opinions; or, if any change has taken place in them, it is in consequence of the situation of the country in the years 1803 and 1804, which rendered it essential to the public interest and public safety that the differences of former times, and the animosities they had given rise to, should be buried in oblivion. When the right honourable gentleman now no more proposed that I should have a large share in the administration, it would have been in the highest degree indelicate in me to agitate these questions. Mr. Pitt felt the same kind of delicacy. I hope the house will do me the justice to think, that as I was unwilling to touch upon these topics while Mr. Pitt was living, I am doubly unwilling to touch upon them, at least so much as relates to Mr. Pitt personally, now that he is no more. I am not now going to touch upon them, nor will I ever; but I beg to be understood not to be influenced by any regard to myself, when I resolve to abstain so religiously from these topics. I know not if Mr. Pitt thought in the same way of me; but I always thought, with respect to Mr. Pitt, that he would form a distinguished part of any administration framed with a view to the advantage of the country; and, on this ground, I wish discord to cease. I have not had a distinct opportunity of showing my sense of that wish; Mr. Pitt had, and he expressed it distinctly.

"To speak of Mr. Pitt as disinterested, in not touching the public money, is certainly an insult: but to abstain from making money from his office, which he fairly might—to have been in office twenty years, and in that time to have had no

place of profit but the Cinque Ports, was disinterestedness not to be paralleled in any minister within my memory,—I believe not in any since the accession of the house of Brunswick. This it is that I wish to reward; nor have I any fear that the example will have any pernicious effect."

Mr. Canning, in reply, addressed the speaker in the following words:

"I rise in the hope that, in the little I have to say on this subject, I shall not deviate from the candour and moderation so laudably proposed on the other side, but used, at the same time, as a veil to throw over one or two propositions in which I do not agree. Some of the gentlemen are willing to allow parliament to discharge the debts of my late friend, as a matter of generosity towards an old public servant. I wish it to be known, however, that *the friends* of that illustrious person will not be satisfied to receive this vote as an eleemosynary grant to posthumous necessities; not as a boon of pity or compassion, but as a public debt to a highly meritorious public servant. I did not, from the beginning, expect an unanimous vote: I will not purchase unanimity by conceding a tittle of the services of that illustrious man.

"I appeal to the house whether it was not on the other side that the topics of discussion were started? Objections are made to the form of the former motion. The fault I find with it is, that it is cold, and inadequate to the feelings of those who support it.

"When the friends of this great man consented to neutralise the expressions of their feelings, for the purpose of removing the grounds of opposition to the motion;—when they resolved, instead of dipping the pen into the heart, to look into the statute-book for a precedent;—when they had lowered and diluted every glowing feeling;—when they had restrained and chastised the warmth of their affections, in order to constitute unanimity;—the result has added to the many proofs I have seen in the course of my political life, that nothing is to be gained by compromise. Now, the honourable gentlemen canvass particular acts, and thus agitate topics which were omitted to avoid creating discussion.

"I have no desire to go farther back than to show that the agitation of the objects of dissension originated on the other side. It was expected that this question would have been generally supported,—that all political differences would have ceased,—and that all animosities would have been buried. That brilliant luminary that was before us, whether its dawn was clouded, or its meridian splendour obscured, has held a glorious course for the country, and is worthy to call forth its admiration and gratitude.

"I protest against the mode in which the honourable gentlemen give their support to the motion. I wish to restore to them the benefit of that consistency which they labour so much to reconcile with the support they give. I give credit to him who refuses his consent, because he does not see merit; but I cannot see the ground on which those opposite follow a distinct course. If the sum is to be given as an eleemosynary grant, without any distinctions of merit or demerit, I disdain it. Those who do not vote for it on the ground of Mr. Pitt's merits had better oppose it openly. It is only as a tribute to great merits that I will receive it; and if any one supports it on any other ground than as a testimony and a reward for those merits, I wish him to withdraw his support, and preserve his consistency by opposing it."

Three documents remain as memorials of the high reverence and devoted affection which Mr. Canning entertained for the talents and character of his illustrious friend; and with these we shall close the chapter. The one is selected from a publication immediately after the death of Mr. Pitt; the second is one of the speeches delivered on the immortal memory of Mr. Pitt having been drunk at Liverpool in 1812; and the last is the inscription upon the monument of this great statesman in the Guildhall of the City of London.

"WILLIAM PITT.

"The character of this illustrious statesman early passed its ordeal. Scarcely had he attained the age at which reflection commences, than Europe with astonishment beheld him filling the first place in the councils of his country, and managing the vast mass of its concerns with all the vigour and steadiness of the most matured wisdom. Dignity, strength, discretion, these were among the masterly qualities of his mind at its first dawn. He had been nurtured a statesman, and his knowledge was of that kind which always lay ready for practical application. Not dealing in the subtleties of abstract politics, but moving in the slow, steady procession of reason, his conceptions were reflective, and his views correct. Habitually attentive to the concerns of government, he spared no pains to acquaint himself with whatever was connected, however minutely, with its prosperity. He was devoted to the state. Its interests engrossed all his study, and engaged all his care. It was the element alone in which he seemed to live and move. He allowed himself but little recreation from his labours. His mind was always on its station, and its activity was unremitted.

"He did not hastily adopt a measure, nor hastily abandon it. The plan struck out by him for the preservation of Europe was the result of prophetic wisdom and profound policy. But, though defeated in many respects by the selfish ambition and short-sighted imbecility of foreign powers, whose rulers were too venal or too weak to follow the flight of that mind which would have taught them to outwing the storm, the policy involved in it has still a secret operation on the conduct of surrounding states. His plans were full of energy, and the principles which inspired them looked beyond the consequences of the hour.

"In a period of change and convulsion, the most perilous in the history of Great Britain, when sedition stalked abroad, and when the emissaries of France, and the abettors of her regicide factions, formed a league powerful from their number, and formidable by their talent,—in that awful crisis, the promptitude of his measures saved his country.

"He knew nothing of that timid and wavering cast of mind

which dares not abide by its own decision. He never suffered popular prejudice or party clamour to turn him aside from any measure which his deliberate judgment had adopted. He had a proud reliance on himself, and it was justified. Like the sturdy warrior leaning on his own battle-axe, conscious where his strength lay, he did not readily look beyond it.

"As a debater in the house of commons, his speeches were logical and argumentative; if they did not often abound in the graces of metaphor, or sparkle with the brilliancy of wit, they were always animated, elegant, and classical. The strength of his oratory was intrinsic; it presented the rich and abundant resource of a clear discernment and a correct taste. His speeches are stamped with inimitable marks of originality. When replying to his opponents, his readiness was not more conspicuous than his energy. He was always prompt, and always dignified. He could sometimes have recourse to the sportiveness of irony; but he did not often seek any other aid than was to be derived from an arranged and extensive knowledge of his subject. This qualified him fully to discuss the arguments of others, and forcibly to defend his own. Thus armed, it was rarely in the power of his adversaries, mighty as they were, to beat him from the field. His eloquence, occasionally rapid, electric, and vehement, was always chaste, winning, and persuasive; not awing into acquiescence, but arguing into conviction. His understanding was bold and comprehensive. Nothing seemed too remote for its reach, or too large for its grasp.

"Unallured by dissipation, and unswayed by pleasure, he never sacrificed the national treasure to the one, or the national interest to the other. To his unswerving integrity the most authentic of all testimony is to be found in that unbounded public confidence, which followed him throughout the whole of his political career.

"Absorbed as he was in the pursuits of public life, he did not neglect to prepare himself in silence for that higher destination, which is at once the incentive and reward of human virtue. His talents, superior and splendid as they were, never made him forgetful of that Eternal Wisdom from which they emanated. The faith and fortitude of his last moments were affecting and exemplary."

SPEECH AT LIVERPOOL.

"Gentlemen, It is usual to return thanks for any honour conferred upon an absent friend. I understand that it will not be unacceptable to you that I should presume, on this occasion, to extend that usage, and to express my acknowledgments for the honour done to the name of a departed friend, the illustrious statesman, whom you have just now so feelingly commemorated.

"The sentiments with which you regard the memory of that great and good man are not the sentiments of Liverpool only, but of England; not of England only, but of Europe, and of the world. Mr. Pitt, gentlemen, was always true to those principles which the town of Liverpool has been distinguished for supporting; principles of loyalty and good government at home, and of dignified and magnanimous policy abroad. But Mr. Pitt has not escaped the misrepresentation, or misunderstanding, I will call it, to which these principles themselves have been exposed; and, in the course of the recent contest, his name has been brought forward, and his memory reviled, as the advocate and author of war. Gentlemen, without going now into any argument as to the origin of the war in 1793, this at least, I think, may be affirmed of Mr. Pitt, beyond the possibility of contradiction, that, if ever there was a statesman in the world, whose interests, individually, were founded in peace,—if ever there was a statesman of whom it might be presumed, that, in conducting his country into war, he was led by a sense of irresistible necessity, it must have been he, whose fame as well as whose power rested on the basis of the financial prosperity of his country.

"When posterity shall look back upon that great man, they will discriminate two different eras in his life. The one, when, on his succession to the government of the country, he found the finances of the state dilapidated, and its resources enervated by an ill-conducted war. It was then that, with a skilful and repairing hand, he restored the credit of the country, recruited its exhausted means, explored and expanded its capacities for exertion, and laid the foundation of that solid system, of which it is enough to say, that it has endured amid

the storms which have assailed it since that time. From this statement it may be confidently inferred, that war could not be more the passion of Mr. Pitt than, most assuredly, it could be his interest. Whether it were, nevertheless, the fault of Mr. Pitt or not, (the fault, I mean, of his judgment), that we were engaged, precisely at the moment at which we were engaged, in the war which has continued, with little intermission, to the present time, may, perhaps, be matter of historical controversy; but that, by no human wisdom, and by no human forbearance, that war could have been deferred many years, or perhaps many months, the impartial historian will, I think, find it easy to demonstrate. But be that as it may; however we may have been brought into the war, what admits of no controversy at all is, that, from the reviving energy of his early administration, the country derived that strength by which it has been enabled to go through the contest. The second era of his political life began at the period when, from the centre of Europe, burst forth that volcanic eruption of desolating principles which threatened to overwhelm the civilized world. The firm resistance which Mr. Pitt opposed to the dangers then menacing the country; the promptitude with which he took his stand on the ground of the constitution, and the courage with which he maintained it; the voice wherewith he roused the people; the mighty arm wherewith he saved the monarchy, I need not recall to your recollection; for it is in faithful commemoration of these eminent services that you have this day called upon his name.

"Gentlemen, into whatever hands the administration of the government may be committed, I hope that the ministers will keep Mr. Pitt's example before their eyes; that they will catch, from that example, reverence for the constitution and zeal for the glory of their country; that they will learn from it to unite the interests of the people with those of the crown, in their domestic government; and to uphold, by adequate exertions, and by a tone and vigour of counsels worthy of the high station to which Great Britain is entitled among the nations of the earth, the British name and influence abroad.

"Gentlemen, I am desired by your worthy chairman, before I sit down, to propose the next toast. According to the customary courtesy, in meetings like the present, of drinking the

health of those persons whom the crown may have selected for the management of the public affairs, I am to propose to you 'the health of his majesty's ministers.' In doing so, I beg to be understood, not as the panegyrist or partisan of the present ministers; not as avowing any connexion with them, nor as owing them any obligation or any particular kindness; but simply as paying to his majesty's present ministers that compliment which I would not withhold from any other set of men, placed, in these arduous times, in the same public station, as the chosen servants of the crown; wishing well to all their endeavours for the public good, but coupling my good wishes with this condition, on which alone I can consent to give my feeble support to any administration—that they shall, according to the best of their ability, maintain at home the constitutional principles, and uphold abroad the high-minded policy, of Mr. Pitt."

WILLIAM PITT,

Son of WILLIAM PITT, Earl of Chatham,

Inheriting the genius, and formed by the precepts, of his father,

Devoted himself from his early years to the service of the state.

Called to the chief conduct of the administration after the close of a disastrous war,

He repaired the exhausted revenues, he revived and invigorated the commerce and the prosperity of the country,

And he had re-established the public credit on deep and sure foundations,

When a new war was kindled in Europe, more formidable than any preceding war from the peculiar character of its dangers.

To resist the arms of France, which were directed against the independence of every government and people,

To animate other nations by the example of Great Britain,

To check the contagion of opinions which tended to dissolve the frame of civil society,

To array the loyal, the sober-minded, and the good, in defence of the venerable constitution of the British monarchy,

Were the duties which at that awful crisis devolved upon the British minister;

And which he discharged with transcendent zeal, intrepidity, and perseverance.

He upheld the national honour abroad, and maintained at home the blessings of order, of true liberty,

And, in the midst of difficulties and perils, he united and consolidated the strength and power and resources of the empire.

For these high purposes,

He was gifted by divine Providence with endowments

Rare in their separate excellence, and wonderful in their combination;

Judgment, imagination, memory, wit, force and acuteness of reasoning;

Eloquence copious and accurate, commanding and persuasive,
And suited from its splendour to the authority of his station;
A lofty, and a mild, and ingenuous temper.
Warm and steadfast in friendship; towards his enemies he was forbearing and forgiving.
His industry was not relaxed by confidence in his great abilities;
His indulgence to others was not abated by the consciousness of his own superiority.
His ambition was pure from all selfish motives;
The love of power, and the passion for fame, were in him subordinate to views of public utility.
Dispensing for near twenty years the favour of the crown,
He lived without ostentation, and he died poor.
A grateful nation
Decreed to him those funeral honours which are reserved for eminent and extraordinary men.
This monument
Is erected by the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council,
To record the reverent and affectionate regret
With which the City of London cherishes his memory,
And to hold out to the imitation of posterity
Those principles of public and private virtue
Which insure to nations a solid greatness,
And to individuals an imperishable name.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

Detail of the original cause of the animosity between Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning, written by Mr. Cooke, the private secretary of Lord Castlereagh.

"It is undoubtedly true, that Mr. Canning, during the Easter recess, did make a representation, in a letter to the Duke of Portland, with respect to the war department, founded upon differences which had prevailed between him and Lord Castlereagh; but it is not true that this letter was shown to the cabinet, or that the subject was even stated to the cabinet, however it might have been secretly communicated to some of the members. It is also true, that a suggestion was made for appointing the Marquis Wellesley to succeed Lord Castlereagh. It is likewise undeniable that a decision upon this point was postponed till near the close of the session. It is further ascertained, that towards the close of the session, when Lord Grenville Leveson Gower's writ was to be moved for, on account of his coming into office and the cabinet, that Mr. Canning called upon the Duke of Portland, as a condition of his remaining in the government, to give him a decision upon the proposition for removing Lord Castlereagh, and appointing the Marquis Wellesley his successor; and the Duke of Portland having given Mr. Canning a specific and positive promise to this effect, Mr. Canning pressed that it should be immediately acted upon, and Lord Castlereagh acquainted with it. Lord Castlereagh, however, was not acquainted with it, and Mr. Canning acquiesced in its being concealed from him.

"Undoubtedly Lord Camden was acquainted with the transactions; but it is not true that his lordship ever undertook to make the disclosure to Lord Castlereagh, nor did he ever make it. It is also true that Mr. Canning was thoroughly apprised that it was not made known to lord Castlereagh. And it is further true that Lord Castlereagh, being kept in profound ignorance of the decision for his removal from office, was

permitted, though in fact virtually no longer a minister, and in this state of delusion, to continue to conduct the entire arrangement of the campaign, and to engage in a new expedition of the most extensive, complicated, and important nature, under the full persuasion, not that Mr. Canning had supplanted him in office, and possessed in his pocket a promise for his dismissal, but that he really enjoyed (as during the period he, in outward show and daily concurrence, experienced) Mr. Canning's sincere, liberal, and *bonâ fide* support, as a co-operating and approving colleague. It is further known, that Mr. Canning, having thus in his pocket Lord Castlereagh's dismissal, and having arranged with the Duke of Portland that it should be carried into execution at the termination of the expedition, did, on the 3d of September, the day that the account arrived from Lord Chatham that he could not proceed to Antwerp, write to the Duke of Portland, demanding the execution of the promise made to him. What were all the difficulties which were started from time to time against the immediate execution of this promise it would be extremely difficult to detail: but there cannot be a doubt but the question of the writership, which it has been attempted to connect with this transaction, could have nothing to do with it; as Mr. Canning never contended for Lord Castlereagh's removal from the government, but from the particular office he held, and into which he wished to introduce Lord Wellesley. It appears that the demand of the fulfilment of the promise led to the resignation of the Duke of Portland, and subsequently of Mr. Canning. And it further appears, that as soon as the whole of this unparalleled conduct was, at this late period, disclosed to Lord Castlereagh, he immediately placed his resignation in his majesty's hands.—On the truth of the above facts the public may rely; and they can no longer be at a loss for the real causes and grounds of the demand made by Lord Castlereagh for satisfaction from Mr. Canning."

Mr. Canning's Answer to Lord Castlereagh's Statement.

"It is perfectly true, that so long ago as Easter, Mr. Canning had represented to the Duke of Portland the insufficiency (in his opinion) of the government, as then constituted, to carry on the affairs of the country, under all the difficulties of the times; and had requested that, unless some change should be effected in it, he might be permitted to resign his office.—It is equally true, that, in the course of the discussion which arose out of this representation, it was proposed to Mr. Canning, and accepted by him, as the condition of his consenting to retain the seals of the foreign office, that a change should be made in the war department.

"But it is not true that the time at which that change was ultimately proposed to be made was of Mr. Canning's choice; and it is not true that he was party or consenting to the concealment of that intended change from Lord Castlereagh.

"With respect to the concealment, Mr. Canning, some short time previous to the date of Lord Castlereagh's letter, without the smallest suspicion of the existence of any intention on the part of lord Castlereagh to make such an appeal to Mr. Canning as this letter contains, but upon information that some misapprehension did exist as to Mr. Canning's supposed concurrence in the reserve which had been practised towards Lord Castlereagh, transmitted to one of Lord Castlereagh's most intimate friends, to be communicated whenever he might think proper, the copy of a letter addressed by Mr. Canning to the Duke of Portland, in the month of July, in which Mr. Canning requests, 'in justice to himself, that it may be remembered, whenever hereafter this concealment shall be alleged (as he doubts not that it will) against him, as an act of injustice towards lord Castlereagh, that it did not originate in his suggestion; that, so far from desiring it, he conceived, however erroneously, Lord Camden to be the sure channel of communication to Lord Castlereagh; and that up to a very late period he believed such communication to have been actually made.'

"The copy of this letter, and of the Duke of Portland's answer to it, 'acknowledging Mr. Canning's repeated remonstrances against the concealment,' are still in the possession of Lord Castlereagh's friend.

"The communication to Lord Camden, to which this letter refers, was made on the 28th of April, with Mr. Canning's knowledge, and at his particular desire. Lord Camden being the near connexion and most confidential friend of Lord Castlereagh, it never occurred to Mr. Canning, nor was it credible to him, till he received the most positive asseverations of the fact, that Lord Camden had kept back such a communication from Lord Castlereagh.

"With respect to the period at which the change in the war department was to take place, Mr. Canning was induced, in the first instance, to consent to its postponement till the rising of parliament, partly by the representations made to himself of the inconveniences of any change in the middle of a session, but principally from a consideration of the particular circumstances under which Lord Castlereagh stood in the house of commons after Easter; circumstances which would have given to his removal at that period of the session, a character which it was certainly no part of Mr. Canning's wish that it should bear.

"Mr. Canning, however, received the most positive promise that a change in the war department should take place immediately upon the

close of the session. When that time arrived, the earnest and repeated entreaties of most of Lord Castlereagh's friends in the cabinet were employed to prevail on Mr. Canning to consent to the postponement of the arrangement.

"At length, and most reluctantly, he did give his consent to its being postponed to the period proposed by Lord Castlereagh's friends, viz. the termination of the expedition then in preparation; but did so, upon the most distinct and solemn assurances, that, whatever might be the issue of the expedition, the change should take place at that period; that the seals of the war department should then be offered to Lord Wellesley (the person for whose accession to the cabinet Mr. Canning was known to be most anxious); and that the interval should be diligently employed, by Lord Castlereagh's friends, in preparing Lord Castlereagh's mind to acquiesce in such an arrangement.

"It was, therefore, matter of astonishment to Mr. Canning, when, at the issue of the expedition, he reminded the Duke of Portland that the time was now come for his grace's writing to Lord Wellesley, to find that, so far from the interval having been employed by Lord Castlereagh's friends in preparing Lord Castlereagh for the change, the same reserve had been continued towards him, against which Mr. Canning had before so earnestly remonstrated. Being informed of this circumstance by the Duke of Portland, and learning, at the same time, from his grace, that there were other difficulties attending the promised arrangement, of which Mr. Canning had not before been apprised; and that the Duke of Portland had himself come to a determination to retire from office, Mr. Canning instantly, and before any step whatever had been taken towards carrying the promised arrangement into effect, withdrew his claim, and requested the Duke of Portland to tender his (Mr. Canning's) resignation, at the same time with his grace's, to the king. This was on Wednesday, the 6th of September, previously to the levee of that day.

"All question of the performance of the promise made to Mr. Canning being thus at an end, the reserve which Lord Castlereagh's friends had hitherto so perseveringly practised towards Lord Castlereagh appears to have been laid aside. Lord Castlereagh was now made acquainted with the nature of the arrangement which had been intended to have been proposed to him.

"What may have been the reasons which prevented Lord Castlereagh's friends from fulfilling the assurances given to Mr. Canning, that Lord Castlereagh's mind should be prepared, by their communication, for the arrangement intended to be carried into effect; and what the motives for the disclosure to Lord Castlereagh, after that arrangement had ceased to be in contemplation, it is not for Mr. Canning to explain."

Lord Camden's Statement.

"As it may be inferred, from a statement which has appeared in the public papers, that Lord Camden with held from lord Castlereagh a communication which he had been desired to make to him, it is necessary that it should be understood, that however Mr. Canning might have conceived the communication alluded to, to have been made to Lord Camden, it was never stated to Lord Camden that the communication was made at the desire of Mr. Canning; and that, so far from Lord Camden having been authorized to make the communication to Lord Castlereagh, he was absolutely restricted from so doing.

"As it may also be inferred, that Lord Camden was expected to prepare Lord Castlereagh's mind for any proposed change, it is necessary that it should be understood, that Lord Camden never engaged to communicate to Lord Castlereagh any circumstances respecting it, before the termination of the expedition."

Upon Lord Camden's statement being made public, Mr. Canning addressed that nobleman in the following letters:

Letters from the Right Honourable George Canning, to Earl Camden, Lord President of the Council.

"Gloucester Lodge, Nov. 14, 1809.

"My Lord,—I had written to your lordship, immediately after the publication of your lordship's statement, but I delayed sending my letter, in the hope of being able previously to submit it to the perusal of the Duke of Portland.

"In this hope I have been disappointed, by that fatal event which has deprived this country of one of its most upright and disinterested patriots; the king, of one of his most faithful, devoted, and affectionate subjects; and the world, of one of the most blameless and most noble-minded of men.

"Thus situated, I have thought it right to revise what I had written, and scrupulously to expunge every reference to the authority of the Duke of Portland, which would now stand upon my sole testimony; retaining such only as are supported, either by written documents, which I shall be happy to communicate to your lordship; or by facts which are well known to your lordship or your colleagues, and in which, for the most part, your lordship is yourself concerned.

"Neither, however, can I content myself with this precaution; but must protest, at the same time, in the most earnest manner, against any

possible misconstruction, by which any thing in the following letter can be strained to a meaning unfavourable to the motives which actuated the Duke of Portland's conduct.

"It is impossible, indeed, not to regret the policy, however well intentioned, which dictated the reserve practised towards Lord Castlereagh in the beginning of this transaction; or that practised towards myself in its conclusion.

"It is to be regretted that the Duke of Portland should have imposed, and that your lordship should have accepted, the condition of silence, in the first communications between you.

"It is also to be regretted, that I should not have learnt in July that your lordship was not party to the assurances then given me, on behalf of Lord Castlereagh's friends in general; and that another member of the cabinet, comprehended in that description, had (as I have since heard) refused to concur in them.

"Had I been made acquainted with these circumstances, I should then have resigned; and my resignation would, at that time, have taken place without inconvenience or embarrassment; and without stirring those questions (no way connected with the cause of my retirement), or subjecting me to those misinterpretations of my conduct and motives, which have been produced by the coincidence of my resignation with that of the Duke of Portland.

"But however this reserve may be to be regretted, it is impossible to attribute the adoption of it, on the part of the Duke of Portland, to any other motives than to that gentleness of nature which eminently distinguished him; and which led him to endeavour (above all things) to prevent political differences from growing into personal dissension; and to aim at executing whatever arrangement might be expedient for improving or strengthening the administration, with the concurrence (if possible) of all its existing members.

"And no man who knows the affectionate respect and attachment, which the manly and generous qualities of the Duke of Portland's mind were calculated to command, and which I invariably bore to him, will suspect me of being willing to establish my own vindication at the expense of the slightest disrespect to his memory or prejudice to his fame.

"I have the honour to be,

"My Lord,

"Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

"GEORGE CANNING."

To Earl Camden, &c. &c.

"My Lord,—The statement which has been published in the newspapers, in your lordship's name, has decided a question on which I had before been hesitating, as to the necessity of an authentic detail of the transactions (so far as I am concerned in them, or am acquainted with them) to which that statement refers.

"For that purpose, I think a direct address to your lordship more decorous, both towards your lordship and for myself, than an anonymous paragraph in a newspaper.

"It is with the most painful reluctance that I recur to a subject which, so far as it concerns Lord Castlereagh and myself, had been settled in a manner which is usually, I believe, considered as final.

"Discussions of the causes of dispute more commonly precede than follow the extreme appeal to which Lord Castlereagh resorted. And when, after mature consideration, his lordship had determined to resort to that appeal in the first instance, I should have thought that such a choice, deliberately made, would have been felt by his friends to be equally conclusive upon them as upon himself.

"But your lordship needs not to be informed how assiduously my character has been assailed by writers in the newspapers espousing Lord Castlereagh's quarrel, and supposed (I trust, most injuriously) to be his lordship's particular friends.

"The perversions and misrepresentations of anonymous writers, however, would not have extorted from me any reply. But to them succeeded the publication of Lord Castlereagh's letter to me of the 19th September.

"I entirely disbelieve that Lord Castlereagh, and I distinctly deny that I myself, had any knowledge of this publication.

"But, by what means it matters not, the letter is before the world; and though the course originally chosen by Lord Castlereagh precluded me from offering any explanation to him, the course which has since been adopted on his behalf (though undoubtedly without his privity) might perhaps have been considered as rendering such an explanation due to myself. It is, however, only since your lordship's publication that I have felt it to be indispensably necessary.

"The statement on my behalf, which has also found its way (without my consent and against my wish) into the public papers, was written under a sense of delicacy and restraint, as to the particulars of the transaction, which, from the character of the transaction itself, must always continue to prevail in a great degree; but from which, until Wednesday, the 11th of October, the day on which I gave up the seals, I had not an opportunity of soliciting any dispensation.

"Of the indulgence which I then most humbly solicited I trust I shall be able to avail myself sufficiently for my own vindication, without

losing sight of those considerations of duty and propriety by which the use of such an indulgence must necessarily be regulated and confined.

"It is stated in Lord Castlereagh's letter, 'That I had demanded and procured from the Duke of Portland, before the rising of parliament, a promise for Lord Castlereagh's removal from the war department; that, by this promise, Lord Castlereagh's situation, as a minister of the crown, was made dependent upon my pleasure; and that this promise I afterwards thought myself entitled to enforce:

"'That, after, and notwithstanding this virtual supercession of Lord Castlereagh in his office, I allowed him to originate and conduct the expedition to the Scheldt:

"'And that, during this whole period, I knew that the agitation, and the decision of the question for his removal, were concealed from him; and was party to this concealment.'

"Lord Castlereagh indeed admits,

"That he 'has no right, as a public man, to resent my demanding, upon public grounds, his removal from his office, or even from the administration, as a condition of my continuing a member of the government.'

"But he contends, that a proposition, 'justifiable in itself,' ought not to have been 'executed in an unjustifiable manner;' and he makes me responsible for the manner in which the 'head of the administration,' and some members of the government, '*supposed* to be his (Lord Castlereagh's) friends,' executed the proposition which he attributes to me.

"He is ready to acknowledge, indeed, 'that I pressed for a disclosure, at the same time that I pressed for a decision; and that the disclosure was resisted by the Duke of Portland and his (Lord Castlereagh's) *supposed* friends.'

"But in this circumstance Lord Castlereagh professes not to see any justification of what he conceives to have been my conduct towards him; because, by acquiescing in the advice or entreaties of his 'supposed friends,' I admitted 'an authority' on their part, 'which I must have known them not to possess;' because, by 'pressing for disclosure,' I showed my own sense of the 'unfairness' of concealment; and because, with that sense, I 'ought' (as he conceives me not to have done) 'to have availed myself of the same alternative, namely, my own resignation, to enforce disclosure, which I did to enforce decision.'

"Without offering a single word in the way of argument, I shall, by a distinct detail of facts, in order of their date, substantiate my contradiction of these charges.

"I shall only premise,

"1st, That I had (as is admitted by Lord Castlereagh) an unquestionable right to require, on public grounds, a change in the war department, tendering at the same time the alternative of my own resignation.

" 2dly, (What no man at all acquainted with the course of public business will dispute,) That the regular, effectual, and straightforward course for bringing that alternative to issue, was to state it directly to the 'head of the administration,' the king's chief minister, to be laid by that minister before the king.

" I proceed to the detail of facts.

" In the beginning of April (the 2d) I addressed a letter to the Duke of Portland, containing a representation of the state of his administration, and expressing my wish and intention, unless some change were effected in it, to resign.

" April 4th to 8th.—Upon the Duke of Portland's requiring a more detailed explanation as to the motives of my proffered resignation, I stated, among other things, that a change, either in my own department or in Lord Castlereagh's, appeared to me to be expedient for the public service. I stated my perfect willingness that the alternative should be decided for my retirement; and only requested that the decision might (if possible) take place before the recommencement of business in parliament after the Easter holidays.

" The Duke of Portland requested me to suspend the execution of my intention to resign; wishing to have an opportunity of consulting with some of his colleagues, before he determined what advice to lay before the king.

" The Easter holidays thus passed away. On the 16th of April, shortly after his grace's return to town from Bulstrode, the Duke of Portland opened the subject to one of the members of the cabinet, whose name (not having been hitherto brought forward) I do not think it necessary to mention. Your lordship is perfectly acquainted with it.

" By the Duke of Portland's desire, I had a communication with that member of the cabinet, within a very few days after his interview with the Duke of Portland. He strongly represented the difficulty of making any new arrangement during the sitting of parliament; and urged me to defer the pressing my own resignation till the end of the session. To this recommendation I did not promise to accede; but we agreed (whether upon his suggestion or upon mine I am not confident) that, at all events, no step whatever could properly be taken, until after the decision of the question upon the writership; which was, about this time, brought forward in the house of commons.

" That question was decided on Tuesday, the 25th of April.

" On Friday, the 28th, the Duke of Portland communicated fully with your lordship; and informed me, as the result of that communication, that your lordship thought a change in Lord Castlereagh's situation in the government desirable, provided it could be effected honourably for

Lord Castlereagh, and that it 'could be reconciled to Lord Castlereagh's feelings.'

"From this period I understood that your lordship was constantly consulted by the Duke of Portland in every step of the transaction. Other members of the cabinet were also consulted by the Duke of Portland; but how many of them, or at what precise periods, I neither knew at the time, nor can now undertake to say.

"Shortly after your lordship's first interview with the Duke of Portland (I am sure before the 5th of May), that member of the cabinet, with whom his grace had first communicated, reported to me a suggestion of your lordship's, of a change of office for Lord Castlereagh, evidently calculated on the principles which your lordship had stated as indispensable to such a change. Whether this communication to me was in the nature of a direct message from your lordship, I do not exactly know. But I understood distinctly that you knew of its being made to me; and that whatever observations I might make upon it were to be reported to your lordship. What I observed upon it was, in substance, that it was not for me to presume to say what change would be proper; that I had done all that I had thought myself either called upon or at liberty to do, in stating to the Duke of Portland my opinions, and my intention to resign; that the Duke of Portland alone could either propose any change, or obtain the necessary authority for carrying it into effect; and I therefore recommended that your lordship should state your suggestion to the Duke of Portland.

"On the 5th of May, the Duke of Portland informed me, that he had determined to lay the whole subject, on the following Wednesday, before his majesty.

"On Wednesday, the 10th of May, he informed me that he had done so; and that his majesty had been graciously pleased to say, that he would take the subject into his serious consideration.

"On Wednesday, the 31st of May, apprehending it to be possible that my intention might not have been fully explained to his majesty, and thinking it my duty to leave no doubt upon it, I humbly repeated to his majesty the representations which I had before made to the Duke of Portland, and humbly tendered my resignation. I received thereupon his majesty's gracious commands to retain my situation until his majesty should have considered the whole subject.

"Some time in the course of the next week, I think on the 8th of June, the Duke of Portland stated to me, that he had received his majesty's commands to propose, and to carry into effect, at the end of the session of Parliament, an arrangement for a partial change in the war department.

"The particulars of this arrangement I do not think it proper to detail; feeling it my duty to limit myself strictly to what is absolutely necessary for the explanation of my own conduct. It is sufficient to state, that the object of this arrangement was not the removal of Lord Castlereagh, but a new distribution of the business of the war department, whereby that part of it which was connected with political correspondence would have been transferred to the foreign office; and the business of another office, then vacant, would have been transferred to Lord Castlereagh. It is only necessary to add, that the effect of this new distribution would not have been to take out of Lord Castlereagh's hands the superintendence of the expedition to the Scheldt.

"On the 13th of June, I wrote to the Duke of Portland, signifying to him that, although such an arrangement had never entered into my contemplation, and although I did not think it calculated to remedy all the difficulties which had induced me to bring the state of the administration under his grace's consideration, I was ready, so far as I was concerned, to undertake and discharge to the best of my ability, any duty which his majesty might be graciously pleased to devolve upon me; but I expressed, at the same time, great doubts, whether this arrangement could be expected to be acceptable to Lord Castlereagh, or, in all parts, satisfactory to the public feeling.

"On Sunday, the 18th of June (parliament being expected to rise on the 20th or 21st), I wrote to the Duke of Portland, to inquire whether this arrangement, or any other, was to take place; stating to him that, 'if things remained as they then were, I was determined not to remain in office.'

"(June 18th.)—In answer, the Duke of Portland mentioned to me a new plan of arrangement, altogether different from that which he had been authorized to carry into effect; and stated that he had sent for your lordship, and the other member of the cabinet with whom your lordship and the Duke of Portland had been in constant communication, to cooperate with him in forwarding this new plan, and to urge Lord Castlereagh to consent to it.

"The particulars of this new plan I do not think it necessary to state, as I learnt from the Duke of Portland, either the next day or the day following it, that to this plan Lord Castlereagh certainly could not be brought to agree. Whether this was known to his grace only from your lordship, or through your lordship from Lord Castlereagh himself, I was not apprised.

"On Wednesday, the 21st, the day of the rising of parliament, I was assured by the Duke of Portland, that the specific arrangement which he had in the first instance proposed, viz. the new distribution of the business of the war department, should be carried into effect; and that his

majesty had directed him to desire your lordship to communicate his decision to Lord Castlereagh.

On Tuesday, June the 27th, finding that no communication had been yet made to Lord Castlereagh, I wrote to the Duke of Portland in terms of the strongest remonstrance, both against the concealment and the delay; and intimated my determination to recur to my original intention, and to press the acceptance of my resignation.

"Accordingly, on the following day, Wednesday, the 28th of June, I had an audience of the king, in which I humbly and earnestly repeated to his majesty the tender of my resignation.

"That same evening, the Duke of Portland informed me that he had that day signified to your lordship the king's desire, that your lordship should communicate the intended arrangement to Lord Castlereagh; and that the communication was to be made by your lordship as soon as the expedition had sailed; which, it was expected, would be in less than a fortnight from that time.

"But before this fortnight elapsed, viz. on Wednesday, the 5th of July, the Duke of Portland informed me that, in consideration of the difficulties attending the proposed arrangement, he and those with whom he consulted were of opinion that another should be substituted for it, which, he trusted, would also be more agreeable to me. He told me that hopes were entertained that your lordship would determine to offer your resignation, for the purpose of facilitating a general arrangement, in which a complete change in the war department might be effected consistently with Lord Castlereagh's feelings. He said, however, that your lordship had not yet finally made up your mind upon the subject; but that you would probably come to a decision before the following Wednesday.

"The Duke of Portland stated his intention, in the event of your lordship's resignation, to submit to his majesty the nomination of Lord Wellesley to the war department.

"It was well known by the Duke of Portland that I had been always anxious for Lord Wellesley's accession to the cabinet; but this was the first mention to me, in the course of this transaction, of his introduction into the war department.—But for a severe indisposition, Lord Wellesley would, before this time, have been on his way to Spain.

"On Thursday, the 13th of July, the Duke of Portland informed me that your lordship had, the day before, actually tendered your resignation; but that your lordship had annexed to it the conditions, that no change should take place till after the termination of the expedition to the Scheldt; and that it should be left to your lordship to choose the time of making any communication to Lord Castlereagh.

"(July 13th to the 20th.)—I made the strongest remonstrance

against this new delay, and this indefinite renewal of the concealment from Lord Castlereagh. I said, that after the repeated postponements which had already taken place, and after the reserve which had already been practised towards Lord Castlereagh, I could not rely upon the execution of any arrangement which should not be now completely settled in all its parts; and, if this were not to be done, I most earnestly entreated that his majesty might be advised now to accept my resignation.

"The Duke of Portland most anxiously deprecated my resignation, as leading, in his apprehension, to the dissolution of the administration. He declared himself to be authorized to assure me, in the most solemn manner, that the arrangement now in contemplation should positively take place at the termination of the expedition; that the seals of the war department should then be offered to Lord Wellesley, an office (to be vacated by means of your lordship's retirement) being at the same time to be offered to Lord Castlereagh; and that, in the interval, and without loss of time, Lord Castlereagh's friends should take opportunities of preparing him for the change, and reconciling him to it, by representing to him the great advantages to be derived from it, in the acquisition of additional strength to the government.

"Not only the Duke of Portland, but other members of the cabinet, Lord Castlereagh's friends, some directly and some through common friends, urged me, in the most earnest manner, to acquiesce in the postponement now proposed. It was represented to me that if, instead of pressing for the execution of the arrangement now, time were allowed to Lord Castlereagh's friends to prepare him for the change, and to reconcile him to it, the arrangement might ultimately take place in an amicable manner; that every public object might thus be answered, without any unnecessary harshness to the feelings of individuals; and that, so far from finding fresh impediments raised to the execution of the arrangement, when the time arrived, I should find all those, to whose representations I yielded, considering themselves pledged equally with the Duke of Portland to see it carried into effect.

"It is due to your lordship to say, that your lordship's name was not, so far as I recollect, specifically mentioned to me on this occasion; but it is equally due to myself to declare, that I never for a moment imagined, nor could have believed, that the general description of 'Lord Castlereagh's friends,' as stated to me without exception or qualification by the Duke of Portland, did not comprehend your lordship, whose proffered resignation was the basis of the whole arrangement, and without whose express consent, therefore, no other person could announce the arrangement to Lord Castlereagh.

"By these representations and assurances, at length, (July 20,) most

reluctantly, and, I confess, against my better judgment, I was induced to acquiesce in the proposed postponement of the change; and consented to remain in office till the termination of the expedition.

" On Saturday, September the 2d, the result of the expedition to the Scheldt being then known, I wrote to the Duke of Portland, at Bulstrode, reminding his grace, that the period fixed for offering the seals of the war department to Lord Wellesley was arrived.

" On the following Wednesday, the 6th of September, the Duke of Portland informed me, that no steps whatever had been taken by any of Lord Castlereagh's friends to reconcile him to the change, or to prepare him for it; that the execution of the arrangement would be attended with other resignations, or at least with one other resignation (of which I had never before received the slightest intimation); and that he had himself determined to retire.

" Upon receiving this intelligence, I immediately disclaimed any wish that the arrangement, however positively I understood it to have been settled, should be carried into effect under circumstances to me so unexpected; and instantly reverted to that ' alternative' which, upon each successive stage of difficulties and delays, I had uniformly pressed—that of the tender of my own resignation; which I desired the Duke of Portland to lay that day before the king.

" On the following day, Thursday the 7th of September, I declined attending the cabinet; stating, in a letter to the Duke of Portland (which I left it to his grace to communicate to the cabinet if he should think proper), that I considered my resignation as in his majesty's hands, and myself as holding my office only until my successor should be named.

" On Friday, the 8th, I heard from the Duke of Portland that Lord Castlereagh had sent in his resignation. I have been informed since (but whether correctly or not I cannot affirm) that he did so in consequence of a communication made to him, by your lordship, after the cabinet of the preceding day.

" On Thursday, the 14th of September, your lordship called upon me at the foreign office, by your own appointment, for the purpose of explaining the causes which had prevented your making any communication to Lord Castlereagh in the earlier stages of the transaction.

" On Tuesday, September the 19th, your lordship, in answer to a letter of mine of the preceding day, explained to me the grounds of your silence to Lord Castlereagh, during the latter period of the transaction.

" On Wednesday morning, September the 20th, I received from Lord Castlereagh the letter which produced our meeting.

" From this series of facts it appears,

"That, in April, I made a representation to the king's first minister, on the general state of the administration; and that, in the course of the discussions arising out of that representation, I proposed, on public grounds, not, as Lord Castlereagh appears to have been informed, his removal from the administration, but the alternative of a change, either in the war or foreign department:

"That, on the 10th of May, the Duke of Portland submitted to his majesty the subject of my representation; and informed me that his majesty would be pleased to take it into his consideration:

"That, from the 10th of May until the 8th of June, I was wholly unapprised of the result of that consideration; but that, for fear of misapprehension, I had, in person, during that interval,—viz. on May 31, humbly repeated my representation, and tendered my resignation to his majesty:

"That, on or about the 8th of June, for the first time, an arrangement was stated to me, which had for its object a new distribution of the business of the war department; and that, on the 13th, I signified my acquiescence in that arrangement, so far as I was concerned:

"That, on the 18th, another arrangement was stated to me, to be substituted for that in which I had acquiesced: but that, on the 21st, it was announced to me that the first arrangement was finally decided upon; was to be immediately carried into effect; and was to be communicated to Lord Castlereagh by your lordship:

"That, on the 27th of June, no step appearing to have been taken, either to execute the intended arrangement, or to apprise Lord Castlereagh of it, I remonstrated against the delay, and against the concealment from Lord Castlereagh: and that, on the 28th, I again tendered my resignation; and that on the same day your lordship received an injunction to communicate the intended arrangement to Lord Castlereagh:

"That, on the 5th of July, a new plan was stated to me to be in contemplation; a plan originating with your lordship, and depending for its execution upon a step to be taken by yourself: that this plan was, on the 13th, announced to me as settled, and as intended to be substituted for that which had been first proposed:

"That I at that time renewed my remonstrances, in the strongest manner, both against the delay and against the concealment; but that it was stated to me to be an indispensable condition of this plan, on your lordship's part, that it should not be acted upon till the termination of the expedition to the Scheldt; and that the time of making the communication to Lord Castlereagh should be left to your lordship's discretion:

"That, at length, in compliance with the representations and en-

treaties of the Duke of Portland, and of others, Lord Castlereagh's friends, and upon the most solemn assurances that Lord Castlereagh should in the mean time be prepared by his friends for the change, and that the change should positively take place at the period fixed by your lordship; I consented to remain in office:

"That, on Wednesday, the 6th of September, finding that nothing had been done towards preparing Lord Castlereagh for the arrangement; and that the execution of it would be attended with difficulties of which I had not before been apprised, I desired the Duke of Portland to lay my resignation before the king.

"Your lordship will therefore perceive,

"That, up to the 8th of June, so far from being in possession of any 'promise of Lord Castlereagh's removal,' and from his continuance in office being made thereby dependent upon my pleasure;—no decision whatever had, to my knowledge, been taken, up to that time; no proposal had been made to me by the Duke of Portland, in any way affecting Lord Castlereagh's political situation; and no intimation had been given to me, whether my own resignation would be finally accepted or declined:

"That the arrangement which was in contemplation from the 8th of June to the 5th of July, in no degree affected, and was never intended to affect, 'the conduct of the expedition to the Scheldt:'

"That Lord Castlereagh's 'removal from the war department' was first determined upon as part of the plan of which your lordship's resignation was the basis:

"That his 'removal from the administration' was not at any time 'demanded by me:'

"And, lastly, That I *did* employ the tender of my own resignation, not to 'enforce decision' *only* (as Lord Castlereagh's letter supposes), but equally to 'enforce disclosure;' and that in fact I did ultimately resign, rather than 'enforce' the intended change, under circumstances so different from those which I had been authorized to expect.

"It cannot be expected that I should labour very anxiously to refute the charge of my having '*supposed*' your lordship and others '*to be* Lord Castlereagh's *friends*;' and having, under that impression, deferred to your opinion and 'authority,' in a matter affecting Lord Castlereagh's interests and feelings.

"That your lordship, in particular, as well from near connexion as from an active and anxious partiality, was entitled to consultation and to deference, on such an occasion, is a persuasion which I felt in common, as I believe, with every member of the government; and which not even Lord Castlereagh's disclaimer has induced me to renounce.

"I should not have been surprised, nor should I have thought myself

entitled to take the smallest offence, if your lordship had, instead of concurring in the expediency of a change in Lord Castlereagh's department, protested against it, and had recommended to the Duke of Portland to advise the king to accept my resignation: and it was perfectly known by the Duke of Portland, and, I am confident, not unknown by your lordship, that, at any moment, from the beginning of these discussions to the end, I was not only ready but desirous to terminate them by resigning.

"But when the opinion of the expediency of a change in the war department had been adopted by so many of the immediate friends of Lord Castlereagh, upon the condition that it should be reconciled to Lord Castlereagh's feelings, and when they, and your lordship among the first, had devised and concerted with the king's first minister the mode of carrying that object into execution, I cannot help thinking that I should have been much, and justly, blamed, if I had insisted upon taking the communication to Lord Castlereagh out of your hands into my own.

"I now come to your lordship's statement*.

"This statement appears to me to have been much misunderstood. It has been construed, as if your lordship had meant to aver that what you were *restricted from doing*, and what you *had not engaged to do*, were one and the same thing: whereas your lordship's statement, in point of fact, contains two distinct propositions, and refers to two separate periods of time.

"The period during which your lordship states yourself to have been '*absolutely restricted*' from making a communication to Lord Castlereagh, extends from the 28th of April, on which day the first communication was made by the Duke of Portland to your lordship, to the time at which the proposed arrangement, for the new distribution of the business of the war department, was superseded by your lordship's tender of your resignation.

"The period during which your lordship states yourself '*not to have engaged*' to make a communication to Lord Castlereagh, extends from the time of the tender of your lordship's resignation to the termination of the expedition to the Scheldt.

"It ought, however, to be observed, that during the first of these two periods—from the 28th of April to the 12th of July—the nature of the communication to be made to Lord Castlereagh, and the nature of the restriction imposed upon your lordship, were entirely changed.

"*Previously* to the 8th of June, the communication which your lordship would have had to make to Lord Castlereagh, was simply that I had represented the expediency of a change either in his department or

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* See page 307.

in mine; and that *no* decision whatever had yet been taken upon this representation.

"With respect to *this* communication, it does not appear that the restriction upon your lordship was absolute and indefinite. But I knew nothing of its existence.

"*Subsequently* to the 8th of June, the communication to be made to Lord Castlereagh was, that an arrangement was in contemplation for a new distribution of the business of the war department.

"With respect to *this* communication, not only was the *restriction* upon your lordship not indefinitely continued; but your lordship actually received, on the 28th of June, an *injunction to make this communication* to Lord Castlereagh at a period distinctly specified, viz. the sailing of the expedition. And this injunction was only superseded by a voluntary act of your lordship's—your tender of your own resignation on the 12th of July, as the basis of another arrangement.

"During the whole of the period, from the 28th of April to the 12th of July, the concealment practised towards Lord Castlereagh was either without my knowledge, and contrary to my belief, or it was against my earnest remonstrances.

"It was without my knowledge, and contrary to my belief, up to the week in which parliament rose; and from that time forth it was against my earnest remonstrances.

"Even when I learnt, in June, that the communication had not been made by your lordship to Lord Castlereagh, I did not learn that you had been prevented from making it by any absolute restriction.

"It was not till the month of July, in the course of the discussions which took place from the 13th to the 20th of that month, respecting the proposal for postponing the new arrangement to be founded on your lordship's resignation, and for leaving to your lordship's discretion the time of disclosure to Lord Castlereagh, that I learnt that the silence which you had hitherto observed towards him had been imposed upon your lordship by the injunction of the Duke of Portland. I did not till then know with whom the concealment hitherto practised had originated; I frankly own that I thought it had originated with your lordship; I was anxious above all things that it should not be ever suspected that it had originated with me; or that I had been a consenting party to it, or even (till a late period) conscious of its existence.

"In my correspondence with the Duke of Portland at this period, therefore, at the same time that I resisted the new delay then proposed, I disclaimed any concurrence in the concealment which had been hitherto practised—and requested 'that it might be remembered hereafter, whenever that concealment should be alleged against *me*, as an act of injustice to Lord Castlereagh, that it did not originate in *my* suggestion; that, so

far from desiring it, I had conceived (however erroneously) *your lordship* to be the sure channel of communication to Lord Castlereagh; and that up to a very late period I had believed such communication to have been actually made.'

"The Duke of Portland, in answer, acknowledged my repeated remonstrances against the concealment; stating himself at the same time not to have been aware that I had at any time believed the communication to have been actually made; but assuring me 'that he should be at all times ready to avow that the concealment had originated with himself (the Duke of Portland); that he had *enjoined it* to all those with whom he had communicated, from motives which he was at all times ready to justify; and that he was desirous of taking whatever blame might have been, or might at any time be, incurred by it, upon himself.'

"This, as I have said, was my first knowledge of any restriction whatever upon your lordship's communication to Lord Castlereagh.

"If I am asked *why* I believed your lordship to have *actually made* the communication, I answer, because it was natural that you should make it; because the expectation of your making it was the motive which induced me to desire (and I *did* desire) that the communication should be made to your lordship; because the manner in which you first received that communication (as reported to me by the Duke of Portland) tended to confirm the belief that your lordship was the fit channel of communication to Lord Castlereagh; and because I knew not of the existence of any impediment to your pursuing what appeared to me (and does still appear to me) the natural and obvious course to be pursued upon such an occasion.

"It may be objected, that I ought not to have been contented with *presuming* the disclosure to have been made, but ought to have diligently ascertained that it was so. First, I answer, that no person naturally sets about ascertaining that of which he entertains no doubt; and, secondly, I answer, that, the moment that my suspicion of the fact was excited, I did set about ascertaining the truth; and that, upon ascertaining it, I did remonstrate in the strongest manner against the concealment; and enforced that remonstrance by the tender of my own resignation.

"It was on the 26th or 27th of June (five or six days after parliament rose) that I discovered my suspicion to be well founded.—On the 27th I remonstrated.—On the 28th I tendered my resignation.—And in the course of the same day, your lordship (as I have already stated) received an injunction to make the communication as soon as the expedition should have sailed.

"The second of the two periods to which your lordship's statement

refers, begins from the 12th of July, the day of the tender of your lordship's resignation.

"It does not appear, nor does your lordship's statement aver, that at any time during the second period, the restriction which had been originally imposed upon your lordship was renewed; or that any other existed, except that which your lordship had imposed upon yourself, and which was therefore no longer binding upon your lordship than while you might yourself be willing that it should bind you.

"Of the extent to which this *self-imposed* restriction appears to have gone, I had not any suspicion. I knew indeed that your lordship had stipulated to keep the time of the disclosure to Lord Castlereagh in your own hands; but, subsequently to my being made acquainted with that stipulation, I had received the assurances which I have already described, on behalf of 'Lord Castlereagh's friends;' and had relied upon those assurances.

"It was not till the 6th of September that I learnt that those assurances had not been carried into effect. It was not till the 19th of September that I learnt that your lordship had been no party to them. Then indeed I learnt that your lordship had not only '*not engaged*' to make the communication previously to the 'issue of the expedition being known here'—but that in July you had 'stated to *one* of our colleagues' (not the Duke of Portland), '*who was urging an earlier communication*,' that the 'time of communication, so far as you were concerned, was for you to decide; but that no one had a right to say you did not perform that part in the transaction in which you were concerned, *if you did not open your lips to Lord Castlereagh before the issue of the expedition was known here.*'

"This information I received from your lordship, in a letter dated the 19th of September. It was then perfectly new to me.

"I leave your lordship to judge what must have been my surprise, when, after receiving from your lordship, on the evening of the 19th of September, this frank avowal of the real origin of the concealment maintained, during this latter and most important period, towards Lord Castlereagh, I received on the following morning Lord Castlereagh's letter of the same date, making *me* responsible for that concealment.

"I have not to trouble your lordship with any farther observations.

"I have confined myself to matters growing out of Lord Castlereagh's letter, and out of your lordship's statement: on those alone have I any right to claim your lordship's attention.

"To this address to your lordship I have been compelled to resort, however reluctantly, to vindicate my private honour. As to any charges

against my public conduct, this is not the mode to reply to them. If any such shall be brought against me, at the proper time, and in the proper place, I shall be prepared to meet and to repel them.

" I have the honour to be, &c.

" GEORGE CANNING."

No. II.

The will of the Right Honourable George Canning, First Commissioner of his Majesty's Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

" This is the last Will and Testament of me, the right honourable George Canning, of Gloucester-place, Brompton, in the county of Middlesex. I give and bequeath unto my dear wife, Joan Canning, all and singular my personal estate and effects whatsoever and wheresoever, and of what nature and kind soever, (subject to the payment of my just debts, and funeral and testamentary expenses,) to and for her own absolute use and benefit. And I do hereby nominate, constitute, and appoint my said dear wife, and the most honourable William Henry Cavendish Bentinck Scott, Marquis of Titchfield, executrix and executor of this my will, and guardians of my children, during their minorities. And I do hereby revoke all former and other wills by me at any time heretofore made. In witness whereof, I, the said George Canning, have hereunto set my hand and seal, this twentieth day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and nine.

" GEORGE CANNING. (L. S.)

" Signed, sealed, published, and declared, &c. in the presence of

" HENRY WELLESLEY.

" CHARLES ELLIS.

" I earnestly desire that Joan will either pay to my mother 2000*l.*, or (what I should prefer, if it can be secured) an annuity of 300*l.* during her life."

The will and codicil were sworn at Doctors' Commons, by oath of the most noble William Henry Cavendish Bentinck Scott, Duke of Portland, (heretofore Titchfield), one of the executors; a power being reserved to Joan Canning, widow, the relict, the other executor.

His effects were sworn under 20,000*l.*, but it has been since ascertained, that about 5000*l.* or 6000*l.* are their utmost amount.

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